



**WEST AFRICA NETWORK FOR PEACEBUILDING**

**Progress Report  
APRIL-JUNE 2024**

## OVERVIEW OF QUARTER TWO (Q2) PROGRAMME ACTIVITIES

### PEACE AND SECURITY OVERVIEW OF WEST AFRICA

The West Africa region continues to be challenged by recurrent and emerging security concerns. Terrorists and other criminal armed groups<sup>1</sup> remain active, particularly in Mali, Niger, Burkina Faso, Togo and Benin. Their activities involve attacks on civilian and military targets, bombings, kidnappings, trafficking in persons, arms, and drugs, and exploitation of natural and wildlife resources. The escalating violence and insecurity have led to a large-scale displacement and humanitarian crisis in the region.

At the political level, parliamentary elections were held in Togo, marked by political tension and violence. Additionally, countries in the region are grappling with the effects of inflation, rising poverty, unemployment, and other socioeconomic inequalities. Perceived corruption and ongoing global geopolitical tensions and conflicts in Ukraine and Gaza further characterise this context. This has contributed to growing public discontent, leading to protests and demonstrations, particularly in Ghana, Sierra Leone, Guinea, Mali, Togo, and Benin. Notably, civic space has continued to shrink in countries under military rule and across the region.

Between April and June 2024, WANEP's National Early Warning System (NEWS) recorded **2,544** human security-related incidents, resulting in **4,984** fatalities. The monitoring report focused on four thematic areas: Organised Crime and Violent Extremism, Democracy and Governance, Gender, Peace and Security, and Environmental Security.

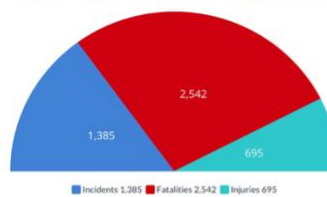
### Organised Crime and Violent Extremism

The triple effects of terrorism, organised crime, and associated humanitarian crises continue to heighten armed violence and insecurities across communities. This is reinforced by various criminal activities, such as terrorist and armed attacks, kidnapping, human and drug trafficking, the proliferation of Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW), and inter-communal violence.

In the second quarter of 2024, NEWS recorded **1,385** incidents, resulting in **2,542** deaths and **695** injuries in the region. A further breakdown shows that **486** armed attacks, including armed robberies, gun violence, and kidnappings, represented 35% of incidents recorded in Togo, Benin, Côte d'Ivoire, Senegal, Nigeria, Guinea Bissau, and Ghana.

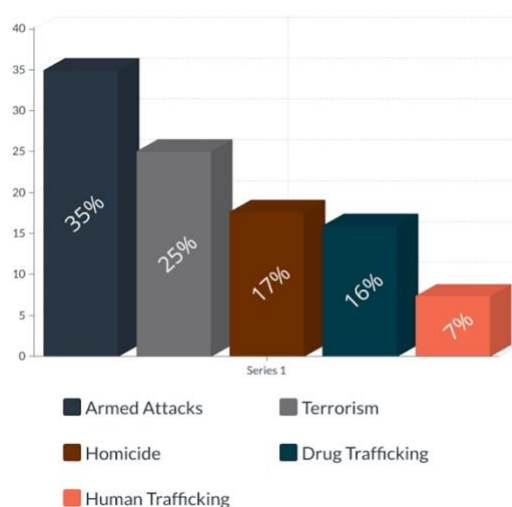
Three hundred and forty-nine (**349**) incidents were related to terrorism and suicide bombing, representing 25.1% of incidents recorded predominantly in

Incidents of Organised Crime and Terrorism (April - June 2024)



Countries most affected include  
Terrorism: Burkina Faso, Nigeria, Mali, Niger, Benin, Togo  
Organised Crimes: Ghana, Cote d'Ivoire, Sierra Leone, Liberia, Burkina Faso, Nigeria, Mali, Niger, Benin, Togo  
Source: WANEP NEWS

Percentage per Incident Types (April - June 2024) - Source: WANEP NEWS



<sup>1</sup> Terrorist and armed groups such as Boko Haram, the Islamic State West Africa Province (ISWAP), the Islamic State in the Greater Sahara (ISGS), Jamaat Nusrat al Islam wal Muslemeen (JNIM), Ansar al-Dine and Katiba Macina and Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM).

Nigeria, Mali, Niger, Burkina Faso, Benin, and Togo. Homicide cases recorded were **232**, representing 16.7%, while human trafficking cases recorded were **101**, representing 7.2%.

In addition, there were reports of transnational organised crime activities, including the illicit drug trade and consumption, in the region. Countries in the region continue to report significant seizures of drugs, ranging from a few grams to several tons of cocaine and heroin. Seizures ranged from an average of 500 grams per month to over 60 kilograms between January and June 2024, with the bulk of these reported by Cape Verde, Nigeria, Burkina Faso, Mali, Liberia, Ghana, Guinea, Senegal, The Gambia, Sierra Leone, and Niger<sup>2</sup>.

During the reporting period, there were **217** cases of illicit drug seizures by law enforcement agencies, representing 16% of incidents reported in the region. Key among these incidents were confiscations of cannabis and other synthetic drugs, such as “Kush<sup>3</sup>,” particularly in Sierra Leone, Liberia, Guinea, and The Gambia, and “Tramaking” and “Gaddafi<sup>4</sup>” in Côte d’Ivoire. Over **889** people were arrested by drug authorities during this period<sup>5</sup>. The total quantity of Kush and other synthetic drugs seized was more than **16,205 kilograms**<sup>6</sup>. The youngest reported drug user was 17 years old, and the oldest was 50 years old<sup>7</sup>.

Furthermore, tons of fake and expired pharmaceutical products, especially tramadol, were seized by authorities in various countries across the region. The rise in reported incidents of illicit drug trafficking and abuse could be attributed to the presence of local and foreign mafia gangs and criminal networks, exacerbated by perceived corruption in public spaces across the region. The proliferation of and easy access to illicit drugs threatens states’ stability, promotes violent crimes, and prolongs communal conflicts.

### **Democracy and Governance**

Within the period under review, the governance landscape was mixed with positive developments and ongoing challenges.

In Sierra Leone, efforts continued to de-escalate the tense political situation in the country. The ruling Government and the opposition All People’s Congress (APC) signed an agreement for national unity following the disputed presidential election results of 24 June 2023. The implementation of this agreement aimed to resolve all differences outlined within it. As part of this process, a tripartite committee was established to review the electoral management system in the country. The Committee has presented its report, including recommendations, to President Julius Maada Bio for consideration.

National Assembly elections were held in Togo on 29 April 2024. The ruling party, the Union for the Republic Party (UNIR), secured 108 out of 113 seats in the new Assembly. Following the legislative elections, the Government proposed a constitutional reform to transition from a presidential to a parliamentary system of governance. It also suggested reducing the presidential term limit from five years, renewable once, to four years, renewable once. This proposal contradicts Article 59 (2) of the 1992 Togolese Constitution, which states that changes related to the election of the President require a referendum. Despite this, the National Assembly approved the new constitution on 19 April 2024, ratified by the President in June 2024. The amended constitution allows the National Assembly to select the President and eliminates direct presidential elections through universal suffrage.

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<sup>2</sup> WANEP NEWS Bulletins – January to June 2024.

<sup>3</sup> A mixture of cannabis indica/marijuana, marshmallow leaves, tramadol, formaldehyde, human bones (alleged) and precursor chemicals such as acetone, methanol etc. Popular in Sierra Leone, Liberia, Guinea and The Gambia.

<sup>4</sup> The latest hype drug used by young people. A mixture of Tramaking and alcohol is spreading to the poorest neighbourhoods in Côte d’Ivoire.

<sup>5</sup> Op. Cit WANEP NEWS Bulletins – January to June 2024.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid

<sup>7</sup> Ibid

Consequently, the presidential elections scheduled for 2025 will not proceed as originally planned. These actions pose significant risks and uncertainties, with profound implications for stability and democracy in the region.

In Ghana, the Electoral Commission (EC) and other election stakeholders continued preparation for the December 2024 elections. The main opposition party, the National Democratic Congress (NDC), continues to express mistrust and a lack of confidence in the capacity of the EC to conduct transparent and fair elections. This agitation arises from opposition parties and sections of civil society who have challenged the integrity of the limited voter registration and voter transfer processes conducted by the EC. Although the Commission considered the exercises largely successful, there were reported incidents of registration machine failures and violence at some registration centres by suspected party supporters and alleged vigilantes.

There is continued regional and international pressure on the Transitional Government in Mali, Burkina Faso, Guinea, and Niger to develop tangible pathways for a peaceful democratic transition. However, the current political stalemate in the mediation efforts to return to democracy in the affected countries provides avenues for the military leaders to consolidate power and maintain their stay in office. This has the potential to wane public confidence and trust in transition processes and cast shadows on the credibility of the regional bloc in terms of its capacity to uphold democratic norms and security in the region.

### **Gender, Peace, and Security**

The Parliament of Sierra Leone enacted the Prohibition of Child Marriage Act 2024. On 2 July 2024, President Bio assented to the law, which bans child marriage and provides legal protection for victims. Sierra Leone is among the African nations with the highest incidence of <sup>8</sup>child marriages.

In Ghana, the legislation, Affirmative Action (Gender Equality) Bill 2024, was presented to Parliament on 14 June 2024. The purpose of the bill is described as “to *effectively redress social, cultural, economic and gender imbalance in the country, based on historical discrimination against women emanating from persistent patriarchal socio-cultural systems and norms despite de jure equality of men and women.*”<sup>9</sup>

In Nigeria, a review of the constitution is currently ongoing to ensure women’s inclusion in political offices. The review would also address the gender imbalance in Nigeria’s politics.<sup>10</sup>

Gender-based violence, including sexual violence in conflict, remains a critical issue. Between April and June 2024, WANEP NEWS recorded **568** incidents of violence against women and girls, especially rape. The incidents led to **23** deaths and over **500** injuries. These incidents occurred in the communities, home/family settings and educational institutions. Other incidents reported include Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) with **08** cases, three deaths and over **21** women and girls injured, especially in Sierra Leone and Liberia. Furthermore, **406** women and girls were kidnapped for ransom by criminal and armed groups operating in Nigeria and the Sahel region.

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<sup>8</sup> According to the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), 30% of women aged 20 to 24 in Sierra Leone were first married or in a union between ages 15 and 18. The country is home to approximately 800,000 child brides, with 400,000 girls married before reaching age 15. Furthermore, 9% of girls were married before age 15. The UN estimates that if current trends persist, 27% of all girls in Sierra Leone will be married before they turn 18 by 2030. In response to these alarming statistics, the Prohibition of Child Marriage Act 2024 was enacted. This legislation was accompanied by heightened campaigns led by the Office of the First Lady of Sierra Leone and civil society organizations, including women's and youth groups.

<sup>9</sup> Politics and Public Policy Legislating Gender Equality. <https://cddgh.org/2024/07/politics-and-public-policy-legislating-gender-equality-part-ii/> (Access 11/07/2024).

<sup>10</sup> VoA News. <https://www.voanews.com/a/nigeria-s-constitution-review-makes-women-s-inclusion-a-priority/7520036.html> (Access 11/07/2024).

### Environmental security

WANEP's NEWS reported a cholera outbreak in Nigeria. Situation reports from the Nigeria Centre for Disease Control (NCDC) indicated **1,159** suspected cases, **65** confirmed cases, and 30 deaths across 30 states. The states most affected, contributing to 90% of the total cases, are Bayelsa, Lagos, Zamfara, Abia, Bauchi, Cross River, Ebonyi, Delta, and Katsina. The World Health Organisation (WHO) has officially declared the ongoing cholera outbreak in Nigeria as part of the global resurgence of cholera cases, categorising it as a "grade 3 public health emergency" requiring an immediate and comprehensive response from WHO. Additionally, other disease outbreaks such as polio, Lassa fever, and meningitis were recorded in The Gambia, Ghana, Liberia, Nigeria, Benin, and Togo

Other incidents recorded were **56** communal violence, such as farmer-herder conflicts, chieftaincy and land conflicts, resulting in **17** deaths and injuries to **326** people in Nigeria, Ghana, Guinea, Burkina Faso, Mali, Togo, and Benin.

Eighty-five (**85**) fire incidents were recorded, including arson, gas explosion, wildfire, and electrical malfunctioning. These incidents resulted in **46** deaths, with injuries to **515** others and property damage in Benin, Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, Liberia, Senegal, and Guinea Bissau.

Other environmental concerns recorded include **176** disaster incidents caused by rainstorms, flooding, and landslides, which led to **116** fatalities with **1,727** injuries and over **11,000** forced displacements, especially in Nigeria, Ghana, Liberia, Côte d'Ivoire, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Guinea, Benin, and Togo.

### PRODUCTION AND DISSEMINATION OF EARLY WARNING OUTPUTS

In the first two quarters of 2024, WANEP produced and disseminated a total of **15,069** early warning outputs across West Africa and beyond, as indicated in the table below:

S/N	TITLE	QUANTITY
1	MONTHLY BULLETIN	84
2	NEWS SITUATION REPORTS	876
3	WEEKLY HIGHLIGHTS	336
4	NEWS INCIDENT REPORTS	5844
5	CEWS INCIDENT REPORTS	3928
6	CEWS SITUATION REPORTS	139
7	ECOWARN INCIDENT REPORTS	3697
8	ECOWARN SITUATION REPORTS	164
9	THEMATIC REPORT	1
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>15069</b>

Through the WANEP-AU Liaison office, **WANEP** supported the AU Early Warning System in the following ways:

- Generation of monthly early warning analyses and reports for Sierra Leone, Nigeria, Liberia, and Cape Verde. These reports were provided to the Director of the Conflict Management Directorate (CMD) and the Commissioner of Political Affairs, Peace, and Security (PAPS) to inform interventions by the Peace and Security Council (PSC) and the AU Commission.
- Contribution to the quarterly Early Warning report of the West Africa Regional Desk, coordinating its generation to inform the Director of CMD and the Commissioner of PAPS, thereby guiding interventions by the PSC and the AU Commission.

- Review of Early Warning reports and other official policy documents and drafted official statements for the Director of CMD, the Commissioner of PAPS, and the Chairperson of the African Commission on peace and security issues in Africa.

## REGIONAL AND NATIONAL HIGHLIGHTS

### 1. TO ENHANCE THE USE OF EARLY WARNING IN SUPPORT OF RESPONSE INITIATIVES

**1.1** As part of the Electoral Violence Monitoring Analysis and Mitigation (<sup>11</sup>E-MAM) 2023-2026 project, funded by the European Union (EU), and in preparation for the General Elections in Ghana in December 2024, **WANEP** conducted the following:

- The completion of the first round of a comprehensive hotspot mapping exercise <sup>12</sup>on 10 May 2024. It identified 29 constituencies at very high risk, 30 at high risk, 106 at medium risk, and 110 at low or very low risk. Additionally, a stakeholder matrix for the elections was developed to support the planning and mitigation efforts.
- A briefing session by the Regional Working Group (RWG) was held on 21 May 2024 to discuss the pre-election context. Sixteen participants (9 males and 7 females) were present, including representatives from ECOWAS, UNOWAS, ECONEC, the Council of the Wise, and the EU delegation to Ghana. The RWG became operational as part of the response mechanisms put in place for the 2024 general elections in Ghana.
- The launch of the National Election Response Group (<sup>13</sup>NERG) on 22 May 2024, in collaboration with the National Peace Council, Ghana. The group will complement the election management related efforts by deliberating on analyses of threats of electoral violence from WANEP's NEWS and contributing through varied approaches to mitigating election-related violence. The launch, attended by various regional and national partners, was followed by an inaugural meeting to establish operational terms and identify electoral risks. After the launch ceremony, the <sup>14</sup>20 members of the NERG held their first meeting on the pre-election context in Ghana.
- A Grant Management training for 20 participants (18 males and 2 females), consisting of accountants and programme officers from the 10 CSO member organisations of NERG. The training was held on 5 June 2024 to ensure the operational readiness of the response management component.

**1.2.** As part of the Wellspring Philanthropic Fund USA-funded project titled: "Strengthening Early Warning Mechanism (SEWM) for West and Central Africa (Phase III)," **WANEP** organised a series of training and events as follows:

- A two-day training on analysis, networking, and oversight of NEWS, AU Reporter, and ECOWARN for community monitors in Nigeria (11-13 April 2024) and Ghana (13-14 April 2024).
- Training sessions for community monitors in Liberia, Sierra Leone, and Guinea Bissau on NEWS and data gathering from May to June 2024.

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<sup>11</sup> E-MAM is implemented by WANEP, ECONEC, ECOWAS, and UNOWAS

<sup>12</sup> covering all 275 constituencies and utilising 27 external risk factors.

<sup>13</sup> NERG aims to develop strategies to address violent threats to the December 2024 Presidential and Parliamentary elections in Ghana.

<sup>14</sup> The NERG comprises 20 state and non-state actors including 10 CSOs namely; Centre for Democratic Development (CDD- Ghana); Foundation for Security and Development in Africa (FOSDA); TAMA Foundation; RAINS; Savannah Women Integrated Development Agency; MIHOSO International Foundation; Community Development and Advocacy Center (CODAC); Tuna Women Development Project; NORTHCODE; CEWEFIA Ghana

- Step-down online training for community monitors in Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, Mali, and Niger from 26 to 27 June 2024.
- Provision of tablets to community monitors to enhance the effectiveness of early warning reporting.
- One-day Town Hall Meetings on multi-stakeholder engagements for the operationalisation of National Early Warning and Response by the National Centre for the Coordination of Early Warning and Response Mechanisms (NCCRMs) in Senegal, Nigeria, and Benin in May 2024.

These efforts were crucial for enhancing the effectiveness and impact of WANEP's NEWS within the broader WANEP Alert and Response Mechanism (WARM). By Strengthening these systems, WANEP aims to improve conflict prevention efforts and support decentralised policy and practice responses to both existing and emerging threats to peace and security in West Africa.

### 1.3. In Togo, **WANEP Togo**:

- issued five critical communications concerning child safety amidst recurrent incidents of Improvised Explosive Devices in the Savannah region. These letters were meticulously addressed to four state Ministries and the *Commission nationale de lutte contre la prolifération et la circulation illicite des armes légères et de petit calibre (CNPLAL)*/ National Commission to Combat the Proliferation and Illicit Circulation of Small Arms and Light Weapons, emphasising the urgency of protective measures.
- Produced Quick Update and Situation Tracking reports for strategic review and action.
- engaged in proactive monitoring and reporting on volatile areas, resulting in a focused document addressing border and territorial disputes. This document was prepared and shared with relevant stakeholders to guide informed decision-making and conflict-resolution efforts.

**1.4. WANEP Mali** participated in a workshop to support convergence and coordination with early warning and conflict prevention/management actors on 10 May 2024, in collaboration with the Danish Refugee Council (DRC). The workshop, organised by the Danish Demining Group (DDG) in partnership with The National Early Warning Centre (CNAP), was part of the "Prevention and Resilience for the Future - PREVENIR" programme, funded for 45 months by <sup>15</sup>MINBUZA. The event saw the participation of 23 individuals (21 men and 2 women). As a key result, this activity created a synergy to improve response to alerts by leveraging the CNAP.

**1.5.** On 8 May 2024, **WANEP Guinea-Bissau** organised a capacity-building session for eight (08) of its community monitors to enhance their involvement in early warning, focusing particularly on defining a pragmatic and efficient coordination strategy.

## 2. TO STRENGTHEN WOMEN AND GIRLS' CAPACITY FOR POLICY-INFLUENCING

**2.1. Women, Peace, and Security Panel Discussion:** On 16 April 2024, **WANEP** participated in a panel discussion on women, peace, and security-focused on enhancing the meaningful participation of women and girls in peacebuilding and conflict prevention in West Africa. Participants emphasised the

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<sup>15</sup> Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands in Mali

urgency of breaking barriers to women's participation and called for substantial budgets to implement gender policies and UN Security Council Resolution 1325.

**2.2. WANEP Regional** organised online refresher and orientation sessions for Women, Peace and Security and Youth Peace and Security focal points from its National Networks. The aim was to review the various activities carried out by each Network during the quarter, highlighting significant results and challenges, while also enhancing coordination between regional and national efforts, and aligning them with WANEP's mandate and strategy.

**2.3.** From 22 to 24 April 2024, **WANEP** participated in a regional workshop focused on monitoring and reporting on the Women, Peace, and Security (WPS) Agenda using the Continental Results Framework (CRF). The ECOWAS Commission, through the Directorate of Humanitarian and Social Affairs (DHSA) and in partnership with the Office of the Special Envoy of the Chairperson of the African Union Commission on Women, Peace and Security, organised the <sup>16</sup>workshop to sustain commitment to the WPS Agenda and foster a collaborative approach to monitoring and reporting. Following the workshop, partners agreed to contribute to data collection efforts in support of the work of country focal points.

**2.4. WANEP Nigeria**, with support from the Global Network of Women Peacebuilders (GNWP) and the Government of Canada, organised the Young Women Forum in line with United Nations Security Council Resolutions (UNSCR) 2250 and 1325. The forum, themed "Mentoring the Next Generation of Women Peacebuilders," aimed to foster mentorship, leadership, and collaboration among future female leaders, focusing on supporting young women to become influential advocates for peace. The two-day (15 & 16 May 2024) virtual meeting brought together 115 participants, including young women and male champions from across the country.

**2.5** Within the context of the USAID-funded project titled: "Peace Action for Rapid and Transformative Nigerian Early Response (PARTNER)":

- **WANEP Nigeria**, alongside its <sup>17</sup>consortium partners conducted the selection, validation, and documentation of community-based gender focal persons in June 2024 in Benue, Nassarawa, and Katsina States. This initiative aimed to sensitise community women about identifying gendered threats, including various forms of GBV, and underscored the importance of gender inclusivity in peace processes. A total of 84 female participants were involved.
- On 25 June 2024, the Consortium organised an event titled "Empowering Women in Kwata Zawan: Building Peace and Resilience." The event focused on raising awareness of women's rights, enhancing economic independence, and promoting collective action. Key outcomes included heightened awareness of women's rights, enhanced perceptions of women's leadership potential, and strengthened structures for reporting and addressing GBV. Participants committed to organising awareness sessions on sexual harassment, advocating for the punishment of sexual exploiters, and advocating for women's representation in traditional councils. The event, attended by 54 female participants, successfully empowered women and fostered a supportive community environment.

**2. 6.** On 7 June 2024, **WANEP Sierra Leone** participated in the validation workshop of the Sierra Leone National Action Plan 3 (SLNAP3) for the full implementation of UNSCR 1325. During the workshop, participants reviewed and approved the draft SLNAP3, ensuring national ownership of the document.

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<sup>16</sup> The event was co-financed by the European Union (EU) and the German Federal Ministry of Economic Development and Cooperation (BMZ) through the ECOWAS Peace and Security Architecture and Operations (EPSAO) Project, implemented by GIZ.

<sup>17</sup> The Consortium comprises WANEP, the Institute for Peace and Conflict Resolution (IPCR), Mercy Corps Nigeria (MCN), and the Katsina Peace Architecture)



**2.7. WANEP Togo** organised the following activities to promote peace and fight against GBV:

- Two (02) community dialogues in Mango and Adétikopé on 3 and 13 April 2024, focusing on the prevention and fight against GBV, particularly sexual and domestic violence. These meetings brought together 164 participants, including 73 women. During the discussions, the factors contributing to GBV in the communities were identified. Participants were informed about the mechanisms for reporting perpetrators and providing support to victims. At the end of the discussions, they committed to contributing to the reduction of GBV in their localities.
- Participated in a television programme organised by the national television on the role of women during the electoral process. This programme highlighted the involvement of women in electoral processes to contribute to stability and peace. Viewers were informed about the role of women in the political life of the country, the measures taken to encourage their participation in the ongoing electoral process, and the importance of recognising and valuing their role in peacebuilding.

**2.8.** As part of the UNDP Togo -funded <sup>18</sup>“*Résilience Économique face à l'Extrémisme violent*” project in Togo, the following activities took place:

- From 3 to 17 April 2024, les *Auxiliaires Villageoises d'Élevage (AVE)*, a beneficiary, vaccinated the poultry of cooperators from the five Simplified Cooperative Societies (5 SCOP-S) and distributed dewormers. This initiative aimed to enhance livestock health, increase productivity, and ultimately improve the economic resilience of the cooperators against violent extremism (VE).
- In May 2024, the project team conducted follow-up visits with cooperators from the 5 SCOP-S to assess their economic progress and mobilise them for incident reporting into the **WANEP Togo NEWS**. The team organised a focus group to discuss the security context of the Savannah region and encourage adherence to security measures and behaviours that promote peace. Subsequently, individual interviews were conducted to evaluate the economic impact of the project on the cooperators' daily lives.

**2.9. WANEP Mali** carried out the following activities:

- Its WPS Officer led a session at a gender integration training workshop organised by *Aide au Développement Durable (ADD)* and <sup>19</sup>*Alliance en faveur des Droits de la Personne et de la Démocratie au Mali (AFDPM)*, funded by UNWOMEN. The workshop, attended by 27 participants (24 women, 3 men), aimed to enhance gender integration skills. The Officer shared WANEP-Mali's experiences, and participants gained crucial knowledge on gender in humanitarian actions and a better understanding of the Network's peacebuilding efforts.
- WANEP-Mali participated in a workshop from 22 to 24 April 2024, in collaboration with *Réseau des Jeunes Femmes Leaders du Mali (REJEFPO)*, to update the agenda for women in Mali, specifically reflecting the current socio-political, institutional, and security context and focusing on the most vulnerable women. The event brought together 35 participants (32 women and 3 men) from various CSOs. Key outcomes included capitalising on past advocacy actions, identifying new programmes and needs according to the Ten-year Development Plan for the Empowerment of Women, Family, and Child Development, and developing an action/advocacy and communication plan.
- WANEP Mali participated in a consultation workshop for Malian women within the framework of the Inter-Malian Dialogue for Peace and National Reconciliation, held from 3 to 4 May 2024, in Bamako, in collaboration with the Ministry for the Promotion of Women, Children, and

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<sup>18</sup> Economic Resilience in the Face of Violent Extremism

<sup>19</sup> Alliance for Human Rights and Democracy in Mali

Families (MPFEF). This consultation aimed to contribute to restoring peace, social cohesion, and national reconciliation by addressing specific challenges faced by women in various sectors and incorporating them into the Dialogue's recommendations. The event saw the participation of 400 individuals (372 women and 28 men).

#### **2.10** As part of the <sup>20</sup>Just Future programme:

**WANEP Mali** participated in preparatory advocacy work for integrating vulnerable groups—women, youth, persons with disabilities, and internally displaced persons—into the Inter-Malian Dialogue on Peace and Reconciliation. The workshop aimed to develop a document integrating their concerns, involving 30 participants (24 men, 6 women). Key outcomes included i) enhancing advocacy strategies, ii) refining the research document, and iii) synthesising a final advocacy submission.

**WANEP Niger** undertook the following activities:

- In April, the Network participated in the quarterly consultation meeting of the State/CSO framework, organised by *SOS Civisme-Niger*. This meeting aimed to discuss key advocacy points of the member structures of the Just Future Alliance and had 30 participants in attendance.
- From 22 to 24 April 2024, WANEP Niger conducted a training workshop to equip 22 monitors with the necessary techniques for collecting and analysing security information and submitting incident and situation reports to the NEWS. During this workshop, participants were familiarised with WANEP's NEWS, <sup>21</sup>ECOWARN and <sup>22</sup>CEWS. The participants included 14 men and 8 women, with a notable representation of young individuals.
- From 10 to 11 May 2024, WANEP Niger organised an outreach activity to promote the use of local conflict prevention and management mechanisms. This activity aimed to strengthen the capacities of Communal Peace Committees (CCP) for local conflict prevention and management. As a result, local and marginalised populations increased their trust and utilisation of CCP for peaceful conflict resolution, enhancing social cohesion. The activity recorded an 80% satisfaction rate among beneficiaries, indicating an improvement in the quality and relevance of services offered by these structures. 30 participants attended this event, including 8 women.
- From 14 to 16 May 2024, WANEP Niger took part in a training workshop on the conflict sensitivity approach for the Just Future consortium partners. Participants were trained to understand and apply conflict sensitivity in their programmatic activities. They were also equipped for the daily monitoring of conflict sensitivity integration in the Just Future project activities. The workshop had 19 participants, including 7 women.
- Additionally, from 10 to 14 June 2024, WANEP Niger participated in a workshop held in Cotonou to share best practices of all projects and programmes funded by the Kingdom of the Netherlands. This workshop provided an opportunity for consortium partners to exchange valuable insights and experiences, furthering the goals of the Just Future project.

**2.11. WANEP Burkina Faso** has significantly advanced the WPS Agenda in the country through the following activities:

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<sup>20</sup> The Just Future Programme is funded by the Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs and aimed at strengthening the capacity of primary stakeholders to take collective action for more inclusive, constructive and legitimate power relations. It is implemented by a consortium of WANEP, CORDAID, Search for Common Ground, Women's International Peace Centre, African Security Sector Network and the Liaison Office.

<sup>21</sup> ECOWAS Early Warning and Response Network

<sup>22</sup> AU Continental Early Warning System

- Training of 200 women, including 100 young girls from the National Coalition of Women and other women's and girls' organisations, on the Women, Peace, and Security agenda, UNSCR 2250, and political and community mediation.
- Sensitising 200 women, including 100 young girls, on the importance of their participation in transition processes and fostering their engagement in politics. This effort has raised awareness among women and young girls about their crucial roles in peace consolidation and transition processes.
- Supporting beneficiaries of UNDP training programmes in conducting dissemination activities to promote the WPS agenda at the community level and encourage greater involvement of women in public affairs. This initiative involved activities across four regions, engaging local special delegation presidents, and religious and traditional leaders, impacting 573 women and 19 men.
- Organising the commemoration of International Women's Day under the theme "Community Entrepreneurship: What Contribution from Women?" with participation from 100 women's organisations, including 50 young girls from each of the Hauts-Bassins and Centre-Est regions. This event fostered intergenerational collaboration among women and young girls.
- Strengthening the leadership of 30 women leaders in advocacy and lobbying techniques. Participants learned to develop advocacy plans, distinguish between advocacy and lobbying, and create synergies to enhance policy impact.
- Contributing to the development of a national advocacy document on peace and women's rights following a workshop held from 5 to 6 June 2024, in Ouagadougou. The event brought together 37 participants, including 3 men.
- Participating in the workshop on "Finalisation and Validation of Tools/Mechanisms for Gender Equality Integration in Humanitarian Response 2024-2025" initiated by <sup>23</sup>OCHA.

**2.12** As part of the International Women's Day (IWD) 2024 celebrations, **WANEP Benin** and its partners, through the *Programme d'Appui à l'Égalité du Genre (PAEG1)*<sup>24</sup>/Gender Equality Support Programme organised the following activities:

- 5 community mobilisation events, in April 2024, engaging 488 participants, including 402 women, 20 representatives from five political parties, and four persons with disabilities and 6 events involving 489 participants, including 72 men and 20 representatives from five political parties in May 2024. Advocacy messages were delivered by beneficiaries, emphasising personal empowerment for young women and the importance of their participation in decision-making bodies.
- Support for young women beneficiaries of the programme to celebrate IWD 2024 in <sup>25</sup>six (06) municipalities.

Additionally, the Network conducted the following:

- an information and orientation workshop for coaches from Ouémé on 23 May in Porto-Novo. 18 coaches were briefed on the programme and received guidance on coaching mentees. A similar workshop was held on 24 May 2024 in Cotonou for 27 coaches (including two men)
- A leadership paths workshop on 30 May 2024, in Porto-Novo and Calavi, on defining leadership paths and connecting beneficiaries with coaches. 50 young women and 10 coaches participated, with beneficiaries selecting their coaches.

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<sup>23</sup> The United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs

<sup>24</sup> The Gender Equality Support Programme (PAEG) phase 1 is financed by the Swiss Cooperation in Benin. The 42-month project (November 2022-April 2026) is being implemented by the RIFONGA-WANEP Benin-FENEP Consortium (CRWF), whose lead partner is RIFONGA. The CRWF component of the project covers zone 3 (Atlantic-Littoral, Ouémé and Plateau). The general objective of the project is to contribute to the development of women's political leadership in eleven (11) communes in three (03) departments, to increase the number of women in decision-making bodies, with a view to the 2026 general elections, in an environment of peace and social cohesion.

<sup>25</sup> Porto-Novo, Avrankou, Adjohoun, Aguegues (on 18 May); Dangbo (on 25 May); and Sème-Podji (on 31 May)

- A leadership and gender training for 25 women from Atlantique and Ouémé departments on leadership and gender concepts, from 3 to 4 April 2024 and in collaboration with its partners.
- From 28 to 29 May 2024, 50 young women from the same departments were trained in public speaking in political and media spaces, enhancing their skills and confidence.
- 16 advocacy meetings in collaboration with its partners (Swiss Cooperation, <sup>26</sup> *Réseau pour l'Intégration des Femmes des ONG et Associations Africaines* (RIFONGA), in April 2024, with 10 political parties to advocate for women's access to decision-making positions.

**2.13 WANEP Niger** participated in the strategic workshop for women's organisations in Niger on the WPS Agenda, organised by UN Women from 4 to 5 June 2024. The overarching goal of this event was to bolster the role of women's organisations in restoring peace and security in the Sahel region. This was achieved by enhancing the capacities of these organisations in peacebuilding efforts, thereby contributing to the stability and safety of the region.

Additionally, the Network took part in a training workshop for women's CSOs under the "Women Against Violent Extremism" programme, organised by the United States Institute of Peace (USIP) from 25 to 27 June 2024. Participants gained essential skills and knowledge to design, implement, and evaluate programmes and projects in a manner that minimises risks to local communities. This initiative aimed to empower women to effectively fight VE and foster safer, more resilient communities.

**2.14. WANEP Guinea** conducted the following:

- capacity-building sessions for 80 women leaders of female groups under the WAKILI, Women and Engagement project, from 22 to 30 April 2024. This initiative was undertaken in partnership with Catholic Relief Services Guinea (CRS) and *Organisation Catholique pour la Promotion Humaine* (OCPH) and with funding from USAID. These <sup>27</sup> sessions focused on UNSCR 1325, 2250, and related topics; unconscious gender biases; conflict analysis tools and resolution methods; radicalisation; and local governance.
- Capacity building to strengthen the skills of 20 women leaders of female groups in Nzérékoré, from 7 to 9 May 2024. This effort was in collaboration with CRS and supported by USAID, addressing conflict prevention and management, UNSCR 1325, GBV unconscious gender biases, VE, radicalisation, democracy, and local governance.
- conducted a second wave of capacity-building sessions, from 7 to 25 May 2024, reaching women and girl leaders in the localities of Macenta and Nzérékoré. In total, 40 sessions were conducted, benefiting 1,000 participants.

**2.15 WANEP Côte d'Ivoire** participated in the Forum *Grande tribune Citoyenne* on the theme: "Ivorian Women at the Crossroads of Representation, Impacts, and Societies," organised by the NGO *Pouvoir et Influence/ Power and Influence* on 26 April 2024. The Board Chair of the Network provided an assessment of the political engagement of women in Côte d'Ivoire at the event. She highlighted the challenges they face and underscored the importance of male engagement in the ongoing struggle for equal opportunities.

**2.16.** Under the project <sup>28</sup> *Soulager les victimes de la commune de Yopougon et d'Abobo de la crise de 2011 pour contribuer à la cohésion sociale en Côte d'Ivoire: Graine de la paix*," funded by the Victims Support Fund, **WANEP Côte d'Ivoire** undertook the following initiatives:

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<sup>26</sup> In English: Network for the Integration of Women from African NGOs and Associations

<sup>27</sup> The sessions were held in Kankan, Siguiri, and Kouroussa

<sup>28</sup> In English Relief for Victims of the 2011 Crisis in Yopougon and Abobo to Promote Social Cohesion: Seed of Peace

- Organised 14 community therapy sessions in areas affected by the 2011 <sup>29</sup>incidents. These sessions benefited 343 participants, including 287 women.
- Provided material support to programme beneficiaries. 32 beneficiaries, including 28 women, received material support through funding for income-generating activities of their choice.
- Provided physical care for injured beneficiaries of the programme. The rehabilitation process benefited seven (07) wounded individuals, including three (03) women.
- Collaborated with community members from affected areas (Doukouré-Yao Séhi) to validate the memorial work in Yopougon.
- hosted a delegation from <sup>30</sup>*Fonds National de Réparations des Victimes de Violence Sexuelle* (FONAREV), visiting from the Democratic Republic of Congo, on 27 June 2024. This delegation was in Côte d'Ivoire for activities related to victim reparations and participated alongside WANEP Côte d'Ivoire in the following activities: i) Organising a round of integrative and systemic community therapy; ii) Holding meetings with beneficiaries of the Victims Support Fund programme to discuss material support; lii) Presenting the process of implementing memorial projects as part of symbolic community rehabilitation efforts.

**2.17** From 22 to 23 April 2024, **WANEP Guinea-Bissau** participated in the Training of Trainers on Gender Mainstreaming and Dynamics in Disaster Risk and Epidemic Management organised by the African Risk Capacity (ARC). The training, attended by 40 participants, aimed to enhance ECOWAS Member States' capacity to respond effectively to disease outbreaks and epidemics, promote gender-sensitive approaches in managing these crises, provide technical support and awareness on the polio virus in West Africa, and foster innovative partnerships through pan-African and sub-regional collaboration. One expected outcome is the integration of women in project design, programming, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation.

### **3. TO BROADEN THE PEACE EDUCATION PROGRAMME AND SUPPORT YOUTH PARTICIPATION AND VOICE IN ISSUES OF GOVERNANCE, PEACE AND SECURITY**

**3.1. WANEP** held the 10th edition of its “Youth Perspectives” webinar series, on 3 April 2024, focused on "Accelerating Progress on the YPS Agenda: A Call for Increased Investment," echoing the 2024 International Women's Day theme. About 50 participants, including youth leaders and experts, discussed key challenges, particularly the lack of political will and inadequate resources for the YPS agenda in West Africa. They highlighted the need to diversify funding strategies by involving the private sector, development agencies, and youth organisations to enhance commitment and investment for lasting peace.

**3.2. WANEP**, in collaboration with ECOWAS, UNOWAS, USAID, and DANIDA, organised the <sup>31</sup>2024 Youth Summit in Accra, engaging 75 youth participants from all ECOWAS member states. On the side lines of the Summit, youth representatives from Mali and Niger, under the auspices of the Just Future Programme, conducted advocacy meetings with officials from ECOWAS and UNOWAS. The youth presented a 5-point advocacy document, urging ECOWAS to enhance inclusivity in mediation processes by involving youth, religious leaders, and the regional council of The Alliance of Sahel States

<sup>29</sup> They include the Siaka Koné Market bombing, the March 3 Women's Market incident, attacks on Anonkoua Kouté village, and incidents in Doukouré and Yao Séhi neighbourhoods.

<sup>30</sup> In English: National Fund For Reparations To Victims Of Sexual Violence

<sup>31</sup> The Summit focused on digital innovation for inclusivity, regional growth, and stability. The Summit aimed to amplify young people's voices, enabling marginalised groups to influence and negotiate with powerholders, and promoting inclusive decision-making and peace processes while upholding civic space and human rights. Participants included among others, the Director of Political Affairs at UNOWAS, the ECOWAS Ambassador to Burkina Faso, ECOWAS Political Affairs staff, and the Deputy Executive Director of WANEP.

(AES) in Niger, Mali, and Burkina Faso. In response, the ECOWAS representative and UNOWAS Representative at the meeting committed to reviewing the document to determine actionable steps to address the youth's recommendations.

**3.3.** As part of the “<sup>32</sup>Enhancing Youth, Peace, and Security Capacities in West Africa (2024-2025)” project, funded by the UN Peace and Development Trust Fund, **WANEP** provided technical support for the execution of this initiative in Benin and Liberia. Consequently, WANEP and its national networks, WANEP Liberia and WANEP Benin, facilitated the start of the project and carried out the following actions:

- In April, mapped approximately 100 youth networks and organisations committed to the YPS agenda in Liberia and Benin.
- Provided technical support and participated in the inception workshops and the launch of the National Coalition on Enhancing National Youth, Peace, and Security Capacities in West Africa in Liberia (6-7 June) and Benin (13-14 June 2024).

**3.4** The second cohort of **WANEP’s** Youth Transformational Empowerment and Mentorship (Y-TEaM) Programme, launched at the beginning of 2024 achieved the following milestones in the second quarter:

- 7 sessions focused on experience sharing in negotiation, mediation, and dialogue; storytelling in peacebuilding and conflict transformation; and leadership in conflict transformation.
- 24 mentees are actively engaged in internships, mentoring, and online discussions. They periodically receive advice and guidance from their mentors on career planning and personal development.

**3.5 WANEP Nigeria**, in partnership with the Women Advocates, Research and Documentation Centre (WARDC), and with support from the United Nations Democracy Fund (UNDEF), undertook significant activities under the "Effective Implementation of Safe School Policies in Nigeria" project.

- On 21 May 2024, a school-based outreach campaign was organised in Lagos State, involving over 100 participants, including primary school pupils, teachers, and key stakeholders. The campaign aimed to raise public awareness of the Safe School Declaration (SSD) and garnered signatures for a social media campaign supporting SSD implementation.
- Additionally, on the same day, another school-based outreach campaign was organised for students from the University of Lagos, Lagos State. This initiative aimed to gather 1 million signatures to demand the implementation of the SSD in Nigeria. Fifty young persons were sensitised on the relevance of SSD policies and signed the petition. These students referred to as SSD Brand Ambassadors, were tasked with mobilising 30 additional students each to support the SSD campaign for the safety and security of schools in Nigeria.
- Furthermore, on 23 May 2024, a one-day roundtable meeting with educational stakeholders was held to explore developing a legal framework for SSD policies in Nigeria. The participatory workshop facilitated discussions on making schools safe and secure, emphasising the need for communal ownership and stakeholder synergy. Twenty-five participants (11 women and 14 men) were sensitised on SSD policies, and support was sought for drafting a legal framework).

**3.6** In commemoration of Universal Children’s Day, **WANEP Nigeria**, in collaboration with Prince Children Foundation, organised an outdoor fun fair for children on 27 May 2024. The event, themed “The Government is My Friend,” provided a platform for children to express their views on how government policies and programmes affect them. The children emphasised the importance of having

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<sup>32</sup> The project aims to advance the implementation of the Youth, Peace, and Security (YPS) agenda in West Africa by supporting inclusive and collaborative processes for the formulation of the related National Action Plans in Benin and Liberia.

their voices heard and their concerns considered by the Government. As part of the event, the Nigerian Police gave a brief talk on crime prevention, sensitising 70 children (43 girls and 27 boys) on the role of the Government in crime prevention and peacebuilding. This initiative aimed to educate and empower the children on their rights and the importance of a collaborative relationship with the government for societal peace and safety.

**3.7. WANEP Sierra Leone**, in collaboration with various partners, conducted multiple trainings and awareness programmes throughout the quarter. These initiatives aimed to enhance the skills and knowledge of women in leadership, conflict resolution, social cohesion, and peacebuilding, impacting over 670 women across different regions of the country. Specifically:

- The Network supported the UNWOMEN and its partners, with the installation of the Women Peace and Security Coalition Secretariat. The Secretariat coordinates the affairs of women in various districts on behalf of the WPS Coalition. This activity was undertaken from 12 to 19 April 2024
- On 21 May 2024, WANEP Sierra Leone trained women-led organisations to raise awareness on social cohesion, peaceful coexistence, water, and environmental issues. Thirty (30) women participated in this training.
- WANEP Sierra Leone supported established groups to self-organise and conduct community-based social dialogue forums on water, peace, and other issues. Twenty-five (25) women were capacitated in the session held on 23 May 2024.
- As part of the International Labour Organisation (ILO)--funded Women and Water and Peace project, WANEP Sierra Leone organised a training programme on leadership and group management dynamics for the executives of the water kiosks, enhancing their leadership skills to manage the kiosks effectively. Fifty (50) women participated in this training held on 22 May 2024. The Network also conducted a “Peace Ambassadors training” from 1 to 3 June 2024 for local and women-led organisations equipping 150 women to serve as agents of change and promote peace, unity, and social cohesion in their communities. Additionally, on 8 June 2024, WANEP Sierra Leone identified and trained 15 Community Women Mediators to facilitate governance dialogue sessions, mediate conflicts, and promote peace and security during the operation of the water kiosks<sup>33</sup>. Furthermore, on 15 June 2024, WANEP Sierra Leone developed, printed and engaged participants on the harmonised roles and responsibilities cards for members of women-led CSOs. 150 women participated in this training.
- From 16 to 19 June 2024, WANEP Sierra Leone, in collaboration with various partners organised two-day awareness-raising sessions on GBV and distributed awareness materials. 250 women participated in these sessions.

**3.8.** The Youth Peace and Security Department of **WANEP Sierra Leone**, in collaboration with other partners through the <sup>34</sup>Dignity Project, conducted a data collection survey on 29 April 2024. The survey focused on identifying the causes and types of violence occurring in eight different universities in Freetown. The objective is to produce a real-time report to engage students, university authorities, and national policymakers in preventing violence in universities.

**3.9** In the framework of the <sup>35</sup>PEACE WAY project, in collaboration with Partners Global,

- **WANEP Togo** conducted capacity-building for 38 young PEACE WAY fellows, from the Central, Kara, and Savanes regions. The sessions focused on conflict prevention and social cohesion.

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<sup>33</sup> The water kiosks seek to provide accessible, clean water to many of Freetown’s most vulnerable communities in a conflict-sensitive manner. It is expected that young women will be empowered to operate the kiosks as businesses and become agents of change and peace.

<sup>34</sup> The Dignity Project is an anti-human trafficking initiative that aims to help and empower vulnerable young women and girls.

<sup>35</sup> The PEACE-WAY project is an initiative aimed at training 350 youth from the West African sub-region on security issues related to violent extremism and radicalisation. This project is spearheaded by the American NGO PARTNERS Global, with support from WANEP in Benin, Côte d’Ivoire, Guinea, Ghana, and Togo.

- **WANEP Benin** conducted a training session for 39 PEACE WAY fellows, on 10 May 2024
- **WANEP Guinea** organised a capacity-building workshop for the young beneficiaries focused on peacebuilding and conflict resolution on 2 May 2024.
- **WANEP Côte d'Ivoire** trained 39 PEACE WAY fellows, on its inaugural module titled "Introduction to Peacebuilding", on 24 May 2024.

**3.10.** In the framework of its Youth, Peace, and Security programme, **WANEP Togo** organised the following activities:

- A webinar titled " <sup>36</sup>*Les jeunes comme moteurs de la prévention de la violence en période électorale*", held in collaboration with the World Association of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts (GAID) Togo and the Youth4Peace platform. The webinar aimed to encourage youth to reject violence during electoral processes and engage more actively in promoting tolerance and social cohesion. It gathered approximately 20 young participants online, highlighting the role youth can play among their peers, in political activities, and within their communities for peaceful electoral processes.
- Media campaign (TV-radio-digital) for peaceful elections, organised in collaboration with <sup>37</sup>*Commission Nationale des Droits de l'Homme (CNDH)* and Youth4Peace. Emphasising tolerance, non-violence, and peaceful coexistence during electoral processes, the campaign encouraged stakeholders and the population to preserve peace and security by avoiding any form of violence. It produced and disseminated a video spot, an audio spot translated into 15 local languages, and 20 posters. These posters received over 4,107 likes/views.
- Celebration of the International Day for Combating Hate Speech on 21 June 2024. This online activity included a digital campaign and a discussion among youth focusing on their role and commitment to combating hate speech in their environment and society. Approximately 30 young people exchanged views on the content of hate speech, the values of tolerance and respect, and the need to promote a respectful and inclusive environment.

**3.11 WANEP Burkina Faso** contributed to:

- The expansion of the *Peace Clubs*, establishing five new clubs in Kaya, Mogtedo, Ziniaré, Ouahigouya, and Gaoua regions.
- The resolution of a GBV case through the Gender Violence Monitoring Listening Circle at Pabré school, involving a girl, who was victimised by her father. Her education was threatened as she could not attend classes regularly. With support from the listening circle, she resumed normal schooling and successfully passed her BEPC (First Cycle Elementary Education Certificate).
- The facilitation of inter-community dialogue in schools by youth with traditional and administrative leaders at the Professional High School Bruno Bushweiser (LPBB), Municipal High School of Pabré, and Guinkouma School Group. This initiative promoted local conflict management mechanisms among youth and fostered intergenerational dialogue between youth, traditional leaders, and administrative officials.
- The representation of Peace Club members at the Civil Society Conference on "The Changing Sahel - Future Cooperations" organised by Focus Sahel in Berlin, Germany, from 10 to 14 June 2024. A Peace Club representative presented on "Emerging Youth, Political Participation, and Economic Perspectives.

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<sup>36</sup> Youth as Drivers of Violence Prevention during Electoral Periods

<sup>37</sup> National Human Rights Commission



**3.12. WANEP Burkina Faso** strengthened collaboration between state and non-state entities on peace promotion and social cohesion through several initiatives as follows:

- Participation in a workshop (with 16 participants, including 14 men) to develop a Training Manual for National Service members organised by the National Service for Development. WANEP Burkina Faso developed a module focusing on peace culture and social cohesion.
- Facilitation of a panel on "Participatory Security for Enhanced Engagement of Non-State Actors in the Sahel Peace Process" at the Fifth Sahel-Sahara Regional Dialogue Conference from 14 to 15 May 2024, in Senegal. Organised by the Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung Peace and Security Centre of Competence for Sub-Saharan Africa (FESPSCC), the event was attended by eight (8) women.
- Sharing experiences with youth from FESPSCC during their Youth Political Leadership programme session on youth and active citizenship for peace and security in Senegal and West Africa. The session, themed "The Role of Women in Promoting Peace and Security in West Africa and the Sahel," engaged approximately 50 young participants on 23 June 2024.

Additionally,

Through the Support to Peace Initiatives in the Sahel (SIPAS) project, **WANEP Burkina Faso** supported two organisations in the Plateau-Central and Centre-Est regions in implementing micro-projects as follows:

- In the Plateau-Central region, WANEP Burkina Faso supported the association *Appui Aux Initiatives De Développement Dans L'Équité au Burkina Faso, (AIDE)*/ Support to Development Initiatives with Equity in Burkina Faso, facilitating a community mediation <sup>38</sup>activity in Ziniaré on 24 June 2024.
- In the Centre-Est region, the Network provided support to *Développement Endogène et Solidaire du Centre-Est (ADES/CE)*/ Association for Endogenous and Solidarity Development in Centre-Est (ADES/CE) in organising a training workshop on preventing violent extremism and radicalisation using Theatre and Slam techniques for visually impaired students and class representatives in Tenkodogo from 28-29 June 2024. The workshop engaged 27 participants, including 1 woman, 11 girls, 9 young boys, and 7 men, emphasising tolerance and communal sharing through communal meals and mutual acceptance.
- WANEP Burkina Faso supported 06 youths from Peace Clubs and Youth4Peace to train thirty (30) other young people from five localities, enhancing community engagement and peacebuilding efforts.

**3.13.** On 25 April 2024, the Youth4peace of **WANEP Guinea-Bissau** held a meeting themed "Youth Commitment to the Peace and Security Agenda," at the National Secretariat. The event aimed to coordinate and implement joint actions to enhance the YPS Agenda, emphasising the meaningful inclusion of young people in fostering peaceful communities. The event was attended by over 15 youth organisations from Guinea-Bissau.

## **4. TO EXPAND COMMUNITY RESILIENCE AND BUILD THE CAPACITY OF INSTITUTIONS TO PERFORM THEIR MANDATE EFFECTIVELY IN HUMAN SECURITY**

**4.1** Through the WANEP-AU Liaison office, **WANEP** played an integral role in designing and implementing the West Africa Regional Desk peacebuilding interventions of the Conflict Management Directorate of the AU. As the lead coordinator of the project "Strategic and Technical Support to

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<sup>38</sup> This activity involved 20 women, 6 men, a religious leader, and a traditional chief resolving conflicts through role-playing scenarios.

National Peace Infrastructure within Coastal Countries – Benin, Ghana, and Togo,” the office is responsible for leading the project's implementation in these countries in 2024.

**4.2** As part of the Research and Action for Peace (<sup>39</sup>REcAP) project, **WANEP** and its consortium partners organised the following activities:

- The Project Steering Committee (PSC) Meeting held in Stockholm, Sweden, on 8 May 2024. The meeting provided a project status update, discussed strategic direction, and oversaw project implementation. Key agenda items included approving the REcAP Operational Framework, Charter, and Constitution, and a Strategic Action Plan (SAP) for long-term sustainability. Resource mobilisation and the need for supplementary funding were also discussed.
- The first REcAP Meet-Up on 15 May 2024. This ongoing series of thought-provoking online intellectual events provides a platform for REcAP network researchers and practitioners to present findings of studies conducted by the REcAP project and any existing studies that members of the network wish to share on themes such as peacebuilding, conflict prevention, and violent extremism in West Africa and the Lake Chad Basin. The first Meet-Up featured a presentation on the <sup>40</sup>policy brief titled “[Mitigating Armed Conflict in the Lake Chad Basin through Strengthening Regional Cooperation on Climate Change and Natural Resource Management](#).”
- **WANEP** organised a community-based dialogue session in The Gambia on 22 June 2024, themed "Documenting Barriers and Challenges to Peaceful Coexistence and Social Cohesion in Gunjur, The Gambia." The session brought together community stakeholders, including traditional and religious authorities, women and youth leaders, government officials, and representatives of civil society and community-based organisations. The focus was on identifying the root causes and drivers of conflicts, particularly land disputes, and documenting challenges to peaceful coexistence and social cohesion in Gunjur and surrounding communities. The session also helped to identify effective response options for future evidence-based peacebuilding and conflict prevention interventions.
- Four capacity-building trainings on peacebuilding, conflict prevention, violent extremism, and gender and peacebuilding in Togo (6-8 May), Guinea Bissau (13-16 June), Nigeria (24-26 June), and The Gambia (23- 25 June). A total of 80 representatives from CSOs, community-based organisations, youth groups, gender advocacy organisations, and community stakeholders benefitted from these trainings.

#### **4.3. WANEP Nigeria,**

- in collaboration with Independent State Peace Architectures (ISPAs) and Mambaya House, conducted 3-day step-down trainings on Interest-Based Negotiation and Mediation (IBNM). The trainings, held in Nasarawa and Benue states (6-8 May 2024), and in Katsina and Kano states (3-5 June 2024) aimed to strengthen the local capacities of Community-Based Reconciliation Committees (CBRCs) and other key community stakeholders. A total of 131 participants attended, including 98 males and 33 females, with 9 Persons with Disabilities (PwDs). The training enhanced community stakeholders' relationships and communication, improved knowledge of dispute-resolution techniques, and promoted a culture of mutual respect and cooperation.

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<sup>39</sup> REcAP is funded by the European Union (EU) and implemented by WANEP, the Danish Refugee Council (DRC), and the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) in 18 countries of West Africa and the Lake Chad Basin. The objective of the project is to strengthen the role of civil society organisations, community practitioners and researchers in effective peacebuilding, and prevention of conflict and violent extremism in West Africa and the Lake Chad Basin to enable more informed decision-making by policymakers.

<sup>40</sup> More Policy Briefs are available on the REcAP's [website](#)

- in partnership with the Kaduna State Peace Commission and Plateau State Peacebuilding Agency (KSPC/PPBA) conducted community-security dialogues in <sup>41</sup>four Local Government Areas (LGAs) in Kaduna and Plateau States, Nigeria from 20-27 June 2024. The dialogues involved 234 participants (160 men and 74 women), including community members and local security personnel. The primary goal was to enhance social cohesion and build trust between communities and local security forces by addressing security concerns, improving relationships, and promoting a collaborative approach to community safety.
- hosted a one-day virtual conference, on 29 June 2024 to evaluate the impact of migration and urbanisation on conflict dynamics in major African cities. Participants emphasised the importance of collaboration between city authorities and CSOs to foster development and peace. Discussions highlighted the necessity of early warning and early response structures, as well as the integration of peace education into formal educational institutions. The conference was attended by twenty participants (13 women and 7 men).

**4.4.** From 13 to 27 June 2024, **WANEP Sierra Leone** organised bi-weekly radio discussions to highlight the Network's roles and activities in promoting peace and security, fostering unity, and contributing to national development. These broadcasts aimed to enhance citizens' awareness of WANEP Sierra Leone's initiatives and efforts in these critical areas. The radio discussions effectively raised public consciousness regarding the Network's commitment to peace, security, and national development.

**4.5. WANEP Benin**, in partnership with OSIWA, organised a reflection day on 30 April 2024, focusing on "Peace and Security Challenges in Benin and the Expected Contribution of Social Actors." The event gathered 39 participants, including 11 women, and resulted in recommendations addressed to civil society and various stakeholders.

**4.6.** As part of the Austrian Development Cooperation- funded project to combat cross-border cattle theft between Senegal and Guinea-Bissau, **WANEP Guinea-Bissau** and **WANEP Senegal** organised a two-day inter-community dialogue session in Bissau with defence and security forces, administrative authorities, and the community. The meeting aimed to facilitate the coordination of actions by cross-border community frameworks for consultation and conflict resolution related to cattle theft.

**4.7. WANEP**, under the Danish Embassy in Ghana-funded "Support to SDGs 13 & 16 Opportunity Window" project, supported various activities:

- **Ghana Youth Environmental Movement (GYEM)**
  - Launched the Climate4Peace Campaign on April 19, 2024, engaging stakeholders from the community and education sector like the Ghana Education Service (GES) and youth leaders. The aim was to establish partnerships with educational institutions, local organizations, and NGOs.
  - Organised a street campaign in Bolgatanga, Upper East on 20 April 2024, involving participants from five northern regions highly vulnerable to climate change.
  - Conducted a capacity-building training for 300 young people on understanding the link between climate change, peace, and non-violent communication, culminating in presenting a petition to the Upper East Regional Coordinating Council.
  - Held Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) training from 15 to 16 May 2024, focusing 60% on women and girls, training 250 participants.

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<sup>41</sup> The targeted LGAs were Kaduna South and Igabi in Kaduna State, and Jos North and Jos South in Plateau State.

- Hosted the Kokuromotie Climate Arts and Photography Competition Awards Ceremony on June 19, 2024, themed “Climate Action and Ghana Decides 2024” to hold political leaders accountable and remind youth to vote with climate in mind.
- Organised a community dialogue on 18 April 2024, under the Youth Resilience for Peace project, fostering engagement between Karaga Youth Parliament and parliamentary candidates on youth initiatives and peaceful elections.
- **Foundation for Security and Development in Africa (FOSDA)**
  - Conducted community training in Jirapa to promote peaceful social integration between the Fulbe community and cattle herders, involving 30 youth and leaders.
  - Organised a football game on 18 April 2024, to promote social interaction and unity between Fulbes and Dagabbars.
- **Youth Leaders in Jirapa and Sissala East District**
  - Organised Youth-led Community Dialogues on social cohesion and climate change in May 2024 to empower youth and women in peace processes.
- **Tosh Media** organised a concert on 27 April 2024, themed “Protecting Ghana’s Democratic and Human Rights Advancement” to educate attendees, including political agencies and CSOs, on peace education.
- **Concerned Citizens of Atewa Landscape (CCAL)** conducted a community workshop on Climate Smart Agriculture in Fanteakwa District on April 22, 2024, aiming to educate and empower farmers on sustainable agricultural practices across four district assemblies.
- **Savannah Women Integrated Development Agency (SWIDA)** organised a town hall meeting on climate change and civic responsibilities on April 23, 2024, in the Northern Region under the theme "Building Bridges: Empowering Youth as Green Champions for Climate Resilience."
- **West Africa Centre for Counter-Extremism (WACCE)**
  - Conducted a capacity-building workshop on combating hate speech and fake news with media professionals in Tamale, Bolgatanga, and Bole on May 29, 2024.
  - Supported a sensitisation program on television regarding climate change with natural-based solutions on 28 June 2024, to educate the public on climate issues.
- **Youth Bridge Foundation** held a seminar and documentary viewing on 28 June 2024, exploring the nexus between climate-induced migration, peace, and security with experts from the Centre for Climate Change and Sustainable Development at UG.

## 5. UTILISING RESEARCH CAPACITY TO SUPPORT POLICY ADVOCACY AND LEVERAGE PARTNERSHIPS

**5.1. WANEP, through the WANEP-AU Liaison office,** contributed to research and peacebuilding knowledge in the following ways:

- Granting interviews to consultants from the European Union at the Liaison office. These interviews focused on civil society perspectives regarding the implementation of EU support for the African Peace and Security Architecture (APSA) 5, aimed at identifying key priority areas and challenges.
- granting interviews for doctoral research projects. These interviews focused on WANEP's experiences in local peacebuilding and conflict prevention, early warning systems and national response centres in West Africa, and Africa's role in the multipolar world system.

**5.2. In April 2024, WANEP The Gambia,** in collaboration with its partners (UNDP and UN Peacebuilding Fund (UN PBF)/Ministry of Interior/Ministry of Public Service), conducted Conflict and Development

Analysis (CDA) consultations and key information interviews with stakeholders including the Gambia Christian Council and University of The Gambia. These activities aimed to gather insights into perceptions of peacebuilding catalysts and conflict triggers. As a result, three reports were produced and shared with stakeholders, yielding recommendations for enhancing peace and stability from these institutions.

### **5.3 In Togo, WANEP Togo,**

- undertook significant efforts to comprehend and address the impact of violent extremism on women through the production of a comprehensive analysis report. This report, featuring disaggregated data that underscored the vulnerabilities of women and children, was meticulously compiled and disseminated in collaboration with UNICEF. It is expected that its findings will be instrumental in guiding targeted interventions and shaping policy recommendations aimed at enhancing resilience and security in affected communities.
- conducted a study on cross-border conflicts in Togo as part of an AU Border Programme, funded by GIZ and implemented across three West African border areas. The mission documented six border communities in Togo affected by interethnic, interstate, and land conflicts, assessing their impacts on local economies and social life. This effort culminated in actionable recommendations aimed at relevant stakeholders.

**5.4. WANEP Mali**, alongside other specialised research consultants, is currently executing the research project, titled "Strengthening Capacities to Address the Link between Terrorism and Organised Crime in Africa," commissioned by the United Nations Peace and Development Trust Fund, a subsidiary fund of the Secretary-General for Peace and Security. The study focuses on the regions of Nioro, Koutiala, and Bandiagara in Mali, enabling WANEP Mali to engage communities in these regions to explore factors exacerbating insecurity. The project has achieved significant milestones including the signing of a partnership contract between WANEP Mali and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) in Mali.

Additionally, under the Just Future programme, **WANEP Mali** participated in the Security Perception/Q5 Study workshop hosted by Point Sud and Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI), in collaboration with the Catholic Organisation for Relief and Development (Cordaid) on 25 June 2024. This involvement underscores the Network's dedication to providing valuable insights aimed at enhancing security strategies and promoting sustainable peace in the country.

## **6. TO STRENGTHEN WANEP'S INSTITUTIONAL CAPACITY AND ITS MEMBER ORGANISATIONS TO DELIVER ON THEIR MANDATE**

**6.1** In commemoration of WANEP's 25th anniversary of building peace and inspiring change, **WANEP Sierra Leone** collaborated with the Sierra Leone Tourist Board to clean Aberdeen Beach in Freetown on 13 April 2024. The cleanup effort spanned from Family Kingdom to Kallon Car Park and involved staff and volunteers from WANEP Sierra Leone, the Tourist Board, and other partners. Additionally, on 27 April 2024, the Network spent a day with the orphans at Kombra Golden Kids Home. Staff and volunteers engaged in various activities, including cooking, cleaning the Home, playing games, dancing, and sharing lunch with the children and workers at the Home. These initiatives demonstrated WANEP Sierra Leone's commitment to community service and social responsibility.

**6.2. WANEP Mali** was received in audience by the Minister of State, Minister of Territorial Administration and Decentralisation, and the Minister of Youth, Sports, Civic Education, and Citizenship Construction on 18 and 20 April 2024. The purpose of the meeting was to introduce

WANEP as a leading CSO dedicated to promoting peace and social cohesion, while also presenting its programmes. As part of the presentation, WANEP emphasised its commitment to a responsible approach, distinguishing itself from many CSOs that prioritise activism.

### **As part of their commitment to enhancing the capacity of their staff to deliver effectively,**

**6.3.** a team from **WANEP Regional** organised two online monitoring meetings with WANEP Sierra Leone and WANEP Senegal on 3 June 2024. The discussions focused on assessing the progress of the Networks, addressing challenges, and reviewing the implementation of the WANEP Organisational Development Index <sup>42</sup>(WODI) 2023 recommendations. Furthermore, a physical monitoring meeting was held with WANEP Ghana in Tamale on 4 June 2024. The Secretariat also launched the WODI self-assessment for 2024, which will remain open from 1 June 2024 to 7 January 2025.

**6.4.** From 24 to 27 June 2024, **WANEP The Gambia** participated in a capacity-building training on results-based monitoring and evaluation organised by UNDP The Gambia. This training enhanced the capacities of UNDP implementing partners, including WANEP The Gambia, in effective monitoring and evaluation practices.

**6.5.** The following Networks convened their General Assembly, with a focus on renewing their Board and discussing strategic objectives for the upcoming term.

- **WANEP Benin**, on 4 April 2024
- **WANEP Burkina Faso**, on 1 June 2024

**6.6.** **WANEP Benin** inaugurated its new headquarters on 30 May 2024. The headquarters is now located in Sèmè-Aïtchédji, southeast Benin, providing a central and accessible location for coordinating its peace and security initiatives. This new facility will enhance the Network's capacity to engage with partners and implement its programmes effectively.

**6.7.** The Programme Officer for **WANEP's** Peace Monitoring Centre (PMC) completed his fellowship programme (April-June 2024) in Washington, DC, with the Woodrow Wilson International Center as part of the Southern Voices Network for Peacebuilding, Africa Programme. During the fellowship, he conducted independent research<sup>43</sup> on private security companies and self-defence groups in the Central Sahel region, focusing on Mali, Burkina Faso, and Niger. He also had the privilege of meeting with U.S. policymakers at the Senate, officials at the State Department, and representatives from major organisations and think tanks in Washington, DC, to present his research findings.

**6.8.** As part of its annual staff training and capacity building plan, **WANEP Guinea Bissau** organised a two-day training session on 9 May 2024, at its headquarters for secretariat members focusing on Project Creation and Management.

## **7. COLLABORATIONS AND EFFECTIVE NETWORKING**

**7.1** From 29 to 30 April 2024, **WANEP** participated in the second retreat of the ECOWAS Council of the Wise (COW). Themed "Leveraging and Responding to the Current Governance, Peace, Security Challenges in the ECOWAS Region," the retreat, aimed to address the region's pressing issues. As

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<sup>42</sup> WANEP Organisational Development Index (WODI) is an institutional tool to gauge governance, accountability, institutional capacity and the growth trajectory of the organisation and its extensive network members.

<sup>43</sup> Publications are accessible via the following: [Blog](#) & [Policy Brief](#)

a long-standing partner to ECOWAS, WANEP contributed to discussions on enhancing the COW's role in preventive diplomacy and mediation.

- 7.2** From 6 to 8 May 2024, **WANEP** participated in the <sup>44</sup>Stockholm Forum on Peace and Development, organised by SIPRI. Themed "On the Edge: Navigating a Changing World," the forum facilitated interdisciplinary dialogue among peacebuilding, humanitarian, and development experts. WANEP, as the lead consortium partner in the RECAP Network, co-organised a roundtable on "Security Sector Governance in Coup-Affected Environments: Challenges and Opportunities of Continued Engagement in the Sahel" with Geneva Centre for Security Sector Governance (DCAF). This session addressed SSR strategy shortcomings and proposed solutions through best-practice knowledge-sharing. The forum also provided WANEP with a platform for networking, developing partnerships, and showcasing project achievements.
- 7.3** The Executive Director of **WANEP** was invited by the UN Office of Counterterrorism to participate in an informal dialogue with Mr. Vladimir Voronkov, Under-Secretary-General for Counterterrorism. This dialogue was held on 23 April 2024, in Nigeria, on the margins of the African High-Level Counter-Terrorism Meeting. The informal dialogue aligns with the Under-Secretary-General's practice of systematically engaging civil society partners during high-level events and benefiting from their invaluable experience in the fight against terrorism.
- 7.4** At ECOWAS' invitation, **WANEP** participated in the Expert Group Meeting on the Operationalisation of The Economic, Social and Cultural Council-West Africa (ECOSOCC-WA) in Cotonou, Benin from 12 to 13 June 2024. This marked WANEP's second involvement in such discussions following its participation in the initial meeting held on 7-8 February 2024 in Abuja. The meeting focused on reviewing and enhancing the draft basic framework document for ECOSOCC-WA.
- 7.5** From 24 to 25 June 2024, the Executive Director of **WANEP** participated in the Africa Facility to Support Inclusive Transitions (<sup>45</sup>AFSIT) Regional Dialogue on Strengthening Governance and Deepening Development, contributing to discussions on the challenges and opportunities in strengthening collaboration between CSOs and regional/international organisations. Additionally, he addressed the role of networks in political transitions, conflict prevention, and peacebuilding processes.
- 7.6** From 11 to 13 June 2024, **WANEP** participated in the Fifth Plenary Meeting of the Global Counterterrorism Forum (GCTF) West Africa Capacity-Building Working Group (WA WG) in Cotonou, Benin. The meeting was organised by the Regional Office for West and Central Africa of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC). With the participation of approximately one hundred delegates, the forum featured experience sharing, group work, and presentation sessions.

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<sup>44</sup> The Stockholm Forum is a multi-stakeholder dialogue event that provides a neutral platform for the interdisciplinary exchange of knowledge, experience, and best practices among development, humanitarian, and peacebuilding researchers and practitioners

<sup>45</sup> AFSIT was established by the African Union Commission and UNDP as a programmatic instrument to support complex political transitions in Africa. The regional dialogue, held in Ethiopia, was jointly convened by the African Union Commission, the UN Office of the Special Envoy for the Horn of Africa, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Africa, The Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD), and International IDEA.

**7.7** From 3 to 5 June 2024, **WANEP** participated in the ECOWAS Capacity Building Workshop for National Centres Environment Analysts in Abuja, Nigeria. The workshop focused on key topics including climate change, terrorism, food insecurity, and early warning.

**7.8** **WANEP** hosted a team from the International Republican Institute (IRI) Ghana on 26 June 2024 to explore opportunities for collaboration, with a specific focus on the upcoming elections in Ghana.

**7.9** On 27 and 28 June 2024, **WANEP** and the Centre for the Study of Violence and Reconciliation (CSV) held a collaborative meeting at the WANEP Regional Secretariat, during which the two organisations formalised their collaboration with an MOU and drafted a work plan aligned with shared objectives.

**7.10** **WANEP**, through the WANEP-AU Liaison office, participated in the following events:

- The 28th Technical Meeting Between the AU Commission and RECs on Early Warning, during which he shared WANEP's experiences in early warning practices in West Africa, was held from 24-26 June 2024 in Abuja, Nigeria.
- The review of the European Union Support Programme to the Peace and Security Architecture, where he contributed to identifying key priority areas for AU and EU peacebuilding within the APSA 5 framework, was held in June 2024 in Nairobi, Kenya.
- The review of the African Union Research Project on the *Nexus Between Climate Change, Peace, and Security in Africa*, where he contributed to the review of findings, was held in April 2024 in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.

**7.11.** From 25 April to 1 May 2024, **WANEP Mali** attended the <sup>46</sup>*Forum des Prévisions Saisonnières des caractéristiques Agro-hydro-climatiques pour les zones Sahélienne et Soudanienne de l'Afrique de l'Ouest et du Sahel (PRESASS)* in Abuja, Nigeria. This participation was part of a mission on the Climate Security Project in the Central Sahel, at the invitation of the UNDP regional office in Dakar and AGRHYMET. WANEP's engagement in the PRESASS forum provided new perspectives and opportunities in climate security and conflict management. The mission highlighted WANEP's proven expertise in establishing and managing digital early warning platforms for conflicts and human security, powered by community monitors. This expertise was showcased during the mission's visit to the WANEP-ECOWAS liaison office at the early warning department on 30 April 2024, significantly enhancing AGRHYMET's capacity-building efforts on the Climate Security Project in the Central Sahel.

**7.12.** **WANEP Niger** participated in the following strategic meetings:

- A workshop, on 30 April 2024, focused on access to climate financing in Niger, organised by the U.K. Embassy. The workshop focused on the role of civil society and the private sector in optimising the use of climate financing. The objective was to understand the trends in climate financing flows and their utilisation in Niger, aiming to improve and strengthen the country's capacity to access these funds.
- An exchange day with CSOs under the Power of Learning programme, funded by the Dutch Ministry, on 23 May 2024. The programme, temporarily suspended due to the military coup in July 2023, is set to resume with a focus on the following four areas: i) Learning, ii) Research iii) Learning Environment (electronic) and iv) Communication.

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<sup>46</sup> In English: the Seasonal Forecast Forum for Agro-Hydro-Climatic Characteristics in the Sahel and Sudan Zones of West Africa and the Sahel



**7.13 WANEP Guinea-Bissau** participated, as a member of the steering committee, in the inaugural citizens' convention held on June 8, 15, and 22 across all provinces of Guinea-Bissau. The conventions featured presentations of consultant findings and discussions on 10 key themes crucial for sustainable development, including health, food security, education, youth employment, climate change, and state reform. The event convened administrative authorities, and traditional and religious leaders, with over 50 attendees, including 20 women.

The Network also participated in the <sup>47</sup>International Workshop on the Casamance peace and justice movement from 19 to 21 April 2024, in Cap Skiring, Senegal. The workshop convened 24 participants, from various peacebuilding organisations in Senegal, The Gambia, and Guinea-Bissau. Its purpose was to review the foundation, structure, and strategies of the movement to enhance implementation approaches with the comprehensive participation of all member organisations.

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<sup>47</sup> Funded by AJWS (American Jewish World Service), CALDHIS (Centre Africain d'Appui au Leadership, aux droits Humains et a l'Innovation Social)