



TERMS OF REFERENCE (ToR)

Gender Advisor to ECOWAS Department of Political Affairs, Peace and Security

GENERAL INFORMATION

Service/Work description: Engagement as Gender Advisor to support the implementation of the Women, Peace and Security (WPS) agenda within the Department of Political Affairs, Peace and Security in ECOWAS in coordination with other relevant Departments

Duration of Assignment: 1 year (with option for renewal)

I. BACKGROUND:

1. The Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) has a track history of active engagement in the implementation of the Women Peace and Security (WPS) agenda. There is a common understanding that gender equality is the foundation for the WPS agenda and an essential component in creating more peaceful societies in the region. Article 63 in the revised ECOWAS Treaty (1993) expresses the need for policies and mechanisms for enhancing the economic, social and cultural conditions for women, the incorporation of women's concerns and needs, and to remove the constraints for women's contribution to regional development efforts.
2. The WPS mandate of the ECOWAS, as highlighted in the ECOWAS Conflict Prevention Framework (ECPF) Component 10, aims to propel and consolidate women's roles and contribution to centre stage in the design, elaboration, implementation and evaluation of conflict prevention, resolution, peacebuilding and humanitarian initiatives, while strengthening regional and national mechanisms for the protection and advancement of women.
3. In 2017, the Folke Bernadotte Academy (FBA) and the ECOWAS Commission's Department for Political Affairs, Peace and Security (PAPS), partnered to undertake and implement capacity building and skills enhancement as part of the ECOWAS' efforts to be at the forefront in the implementation of UN Resolution 1325 and subsequent resolutions on Women, Peace and Security in the region. FBA supported the PAPS in the establishment of a gender focal point system in the form of a Women, Peace and Security Inter-departmental Committee as well as the launch of a series of workshops to strengthen the overall capacity of the Department to work on gender mainstreaming and the WPS agenda.
4. In April 2021, ECOWAS PAPS launched its interdepartmental guidelines on Women, Peace and Security to further support the organisation's efforts to adhere to the WPS agenda when carrying out their mandate on peace and security. The PAPS WPS-committee, comprising members from the directorates within the department as well as the Early Warning Directorate, are tasked to support the implementation of the guidelines in accordance with their technical role and mandate.

II. OBJECTIVES AND SCOPE OF WORK

To further strengthen ECOWAS and in particular PAPS commitment to agenda 1325, FBA, in collaboration with the West Africa Network for Peacebuilding (WANEP), is supporting the deployment of a Gender Adviser to the department.

Under the direct supervision of the Director of Political Affairs, the Gender Adviser will work to a) formalise and strengthen the interdepartmental WPS-committee, b) oversee and support the implementation of the WPS-guidelines as well as c) collaborate on ECOWAS commitment to women, peace and security with other relevant internal and external actors. This includes but is not limited to, the following tasks:

- Support the Commissioner in the implementation of the Women, Peace and Security agenda.
- In accordance with ECOWAS internal processes, formalize the WPS Committee and focal point role. Create statutes for the committee, including coordination with actors outside PAPS.
- Evaluate the view of- and potential role of the committee and its members within PAPS
- Develop criteria/process for new focal points and the committee's coordinating role in PAPS.
- Develop work description/checklist for the focal points in accordance with the work of the units and in line with the guidelines. Train focal points and staff.
- Lead the committee's work to implement the Women, Peace and Security guidelines in PAPS directorates, advise the focal points in their roles and coordinate with other key actors within and outside ECOWAS.
- Hold regular meetings with committee members to review progress and needs.
- Liaise with the Gender Centre in Dakar and the Humanitarian and Social Affairs Directorate to jointly develop an organizational chart/flowchart for division of responsibilities for the Women, Peace and Security agenda within ECOWAS.
- Liaise with FBA and WANEP for technical support/guidance, as required.

III. EXPERIENCE and QUALIFICATIONS

Required:

- Master's degree in the fields of gender studies, social sciences, peace and conflict studies or similar field.
- At least 5 years of experience working in a similar position.
- Extensive knowledge of gender mainstreaming and the Women, Peace and Security agenda in the West Africa context.
- Experience within Political Affairs, Peace and Security sector.
- Excellent diplomatic skills and proven knowledge of engagement with Intergovernmental agencies.
- Project development and management skills with ability to connect with experts, relevant stakeholders within politically complex environment.

Preferred:

- Knowledge of and/or experience working with ECOWAS.
- Knowledge of and experience of working at a regional level in West Africa.
- Experience in managing several reporting lines.
- Language skills in English, French, and Portuguese.
- Basic IT-skills and experience in conducting digital or hybrid workshops.

IV. COMPETENCIES

Professional

- Demonstrate understanding of the political, social, governance, economic, cultural and security environment/ dynamics in West Africa. Good knowledge of institutional mandates, policies and guidelines related to conflict prevention, preventive diplomacy and mediation. Ability to identify, evaluate and integrate information from a variety of sources and assess impact on the conflict management in the region.
- Experienced in writing analytical documents on gender related issues.
- Experience with implementing gender mainstreaming approach to peace and security.

Communication

- Strong communication (spoken, written and presentation) skills, including the ability to produce a variety of written reports in a clear, concise style, to deliver training presentations to external audiences, to build/maintain effective partnerships, to manage information and public information activities.

Planning and Organizing

- Ability to establish priorities and to plan work assignments, juggle competing demands and supervisory tasks, and work under pressure of frequent and tight deadlines.

Teamwork

- Proven interpersonal skills and ability to work in a multi-cultural, multi-ethnic environment with sensitivity and respect for diversity.

V. TIMING AND DURATION OF THE CONTRACT

The Gender Expert will be engaged for an initial phase of 1 year with possibility for renewal.

VI. APPLICATION PROCEDURE AND DEADLINE

Interested candidates are asked to send:

- A Curriculum Vitae, no longer than 3 pages
- A Cover letter that demonstrates their appropriateness for the position

The application should be sent to recruitments@wanep.org with subject line of email message as follows: Gender Advisor to ECOWAS Department of Political Affairs, Peace and Security.

Emails without a proper reference code in the subject line may not be taken into consideration.

The deadline for application is 12:00 midnight on the 17th of November 2025.

VII. INSTITUTIONAL AND REPORTING ARRANGEMENTS

The incumbent will work under direct supervision of the Director of Political Affairs in PAPS, ECOWAS in Abuja, Nigeria with technical support from WANEP's WPS Regional Coordinator and FBA.