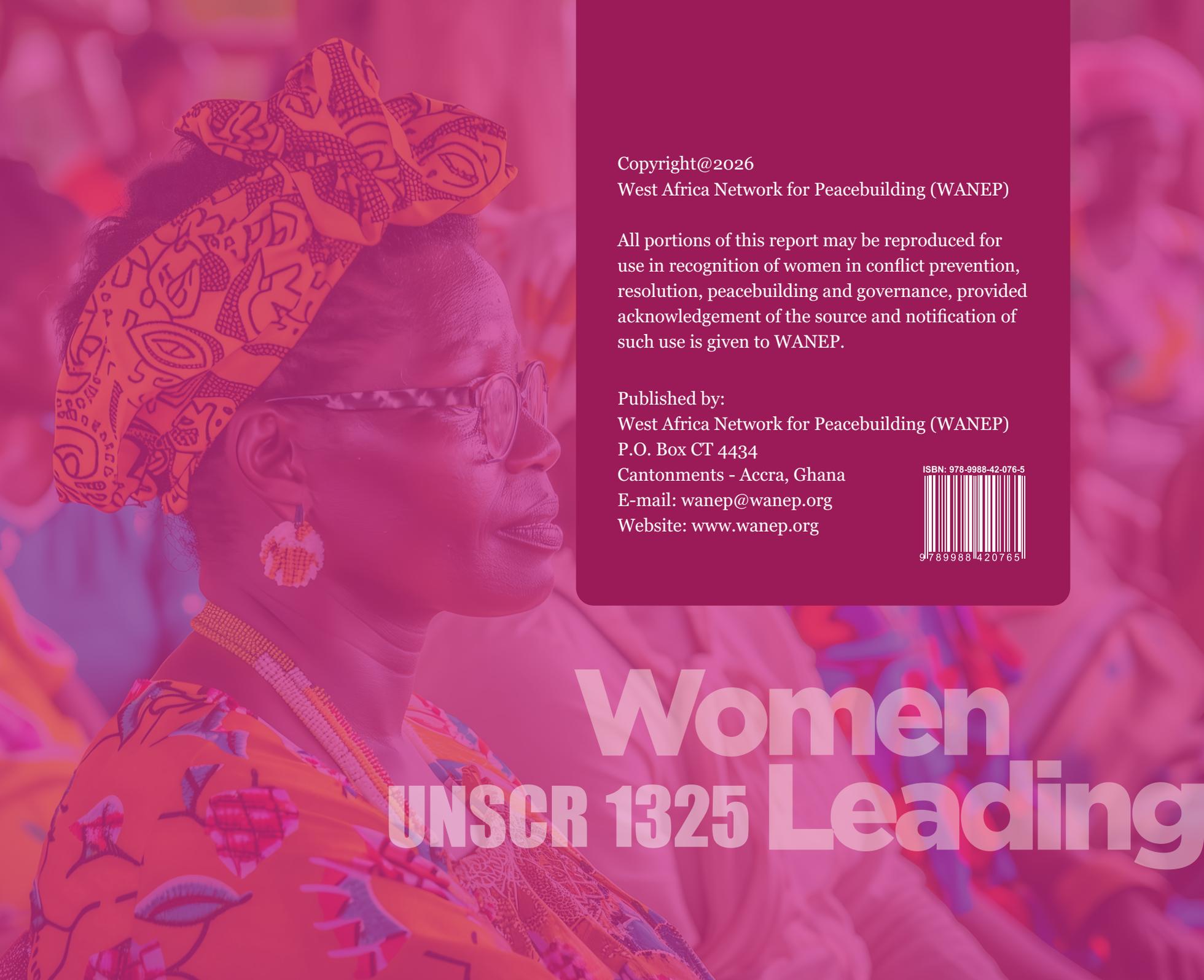# Women Leading
Transformational Change in West Africa:

A REVIEW OF **UNSCR 1325 @ 25** IN WEST AFRICA

UNSCR 1325 women | peace | security

WANEP
Building Relationships for Peace

WEST AFRICA NETWORK FOR PEACEBUILDING
BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS FOR PEACE

Women
UNSCR 1325
Leading

Table of **Contents**

ABM	Association des Blogueurs du Mali (Association of Bloggers of Mali)
AFJCI	Association des Femmes Juristes de Côte d'Ivoire (Assoc. of Women Lawyers of Côte d'Ivoire)
APC	All People's Congress
AU	African Union
C7-WA	Coping with Climate Change as a Cause of Conflict in Coastal Communities of West Africa
CCGAP	Climate Change Gender Action Plan
CESC	Conseil Économique, Social et Culturel (Economic, Social and Cultural Council)
CIPLEV	Comité Interministériel de Prévention et de Lutte contre l'Extrémisme Violent (Interministerial Committee for the Prevention and Fight against Violent Extremism)
CNDH	Commission Nationale des Droits de l'Homme (National Human Rights Commission)
NWC	National Women Coalition
CNT	Conseil National de la Transition (National Transition Council)
COCOFCI	Compendium des Compétences Féminines de Côte d'Ivoire (Compendium of Skilled Women of Côte d'Ivoire)
CRF	Continental Results Framework
CSO	Civil Society Organisation
DDR	Disarmament, Demobilization, and Reintegration
DOVVSU	Domestic Violence and Victims Support Unit
ECPF	Conflict Prevention Framework
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
EPF	ECOWAS Peace Fund
FGM	Female Genital Mutilation
GAF	Ghana Armed Forces
GBV	Gender-Based Violence
GBVIMS+	GBV Information Management System Plus
GEPaDC	Gender Equality Peace and Development Centre
GNWP	Global Network of Women Peacebuilders
IDP	Internally Displaced Persons
IPPS	Intersectoral Platform on Peace and Security
KAIPTC	Kofi Annan International Peacekeeping Training Centre
LGA	Local Government Authority
LAP	Local Action Plans
LRA	Land Rights Act
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding

List of **Acronyms**

NADMO	National Disaster Management Organisation
NCCRM	National Centres for Coordination of Early Warning and Response Mechanism
NDC	Nationally Determined Contributions
NEWS	National Early Warning System
NAP	National Action Plan
NPC	National Peace Council
NYA	National Youth Authority
ONEG	Observatoire National de l'Equité et du Genre
PCRD	Post-Conflict Reconstruction and Development
PMC	Peace Monitoring Centre
PRDF	Projet Restauration des Droits des Femmes (Women's Rights Restoration Project)
REC	Regional Economic Community
NOPSWECO	Network on Peace and Security for Women in the ECOWAS Region
ROAJELF	Réseau Ouest Africain des Jeunes Femmes Leaders (West African Network of Young Women Leaders)
SAC	Security Advisory Committees
SNEEG	Stratégie Nationale pour l'Egalité et l'Equité de Genre (National Strategy for Gender Equality and Equity)
SSRG	Security Sector Reform and Governance
TRCs	Truth and Reconciliation Commissions
UN	United Nations
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNOWAS	United Nations Office for West Africa and the Sahel
UNSC	United Nations Security Council
UNSCR	United Nations Security Council Resolution
WANEP	West Africa Network for Peacebuilding
WESOC	Women Election Security Observation Centres
WiLDAF	Women in Law and Development in Africa
WIP	Women's Influencers Portal
WIPNET	Women in Peacebuilding Network
WODI	WANEP Organisational Development Index
WPS	Women, Peace and Security

List of
Acronyms

Acknowle-dgement

Foreword

Twenty-five years ago, the adoption of the landmark United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 (UNSCR 1325) on Women, Peace and Security (WPS) marked a global recognition of women's indispensable role in the pursuit of peace and stability. It affirmed that sustainable peace cannot be achieved without the full participation of women in conflict prevention, resolution, peacebuilding, and governance. Two and a half decades later, the principles of this historic resolution remain as relevant as ever - and for us in West Africa, they carry renewed urgency.

For the West Africa Network for Peacebuilding (WANEP), the WPS agenda is not merely a policy commitment; it is integral to our mission and institutional identity. Over the past twenty-five years, WANEP has played a pivotal role in translating global and regional WPS frameworks into tangible local actions - from supporting the development and implementation of National Action Plans, to strengthening community peace infrastructures, advocating for gender-responsive legal reforms, and amplifying the voices of women peacebuilders across the region.
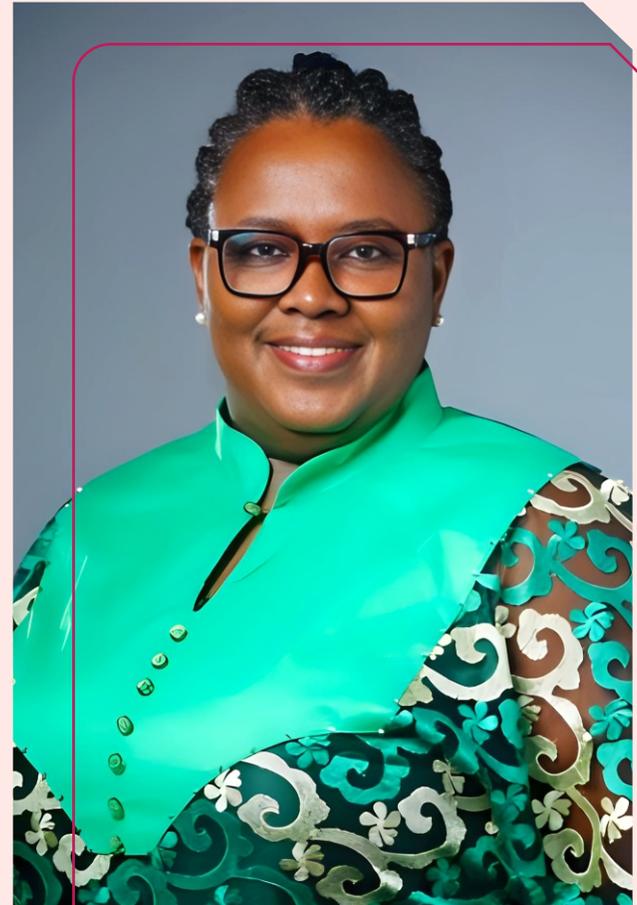
Mrs. Levinia Addae-Mensah
Executive Director
West Africa Network for Peacebuilding (WANEP)

> " ——
>
> The future of the WPS agenda in West Africa depends on bridging the gap between commitment and implementation, strengthening accountability, and ensuring that women's participation is recognised as a strategic imperative for peace and security.
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foreword

This report, 'Women Leading Transformational Change: A review of UNSCR 1325 @25 in West Africa', represents another step in our ongoing commitment to the realisation of the WPS agenda. It ensures that our collective efforts are documented, lessons are learned, and best practices are shared as we continue to work towards the sustainable transformation of the lives of women and girls in West Africa.

The report offers both a reflective and forward-looking assessment of how far the WPS agenda has advanced in our region, the gaps that persist, and the opportunities that lie ahead. It highlights the collective progress of governments, civil society, and regional institutions, while drawing attention to the enduring barriers that continue to limit women's full and meaningful participation in peace and security processes.

As we commemorate this 25-year milestone, it is evident that the journey ahead requires renewed energy, political will, and sustained investment. The future of the WPS agenda in West Africa depends on bridging the gap between commitment and implementation, strengthening accountability, and ensuring that women's participation is recognised as a strategic imperative for peace and security.

On behalf of WANEP, I express profound appreciation to all our partners, national networks, and women peacebuilders whose tireless work continues to bring the vision of UNSCR 1325 to life. This report is both a celebration of progress and a call to action. It is a reminder that achieving inclusive and lasting peace demands our collective, sustained, and gender-responsive commitment.

Executive **Summary**

The United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 (UNSCR 1325), adopted in October 2000, marked an important milestone in the promotion of the Women, Peace and Security (WPS) agenda. Resolution 1325 recognises women's critical role in achieving sustainable peace and security and acknowledges the disproportionate impact of conflict on women and girls. Over the past 25 years, the WPS agenda has been instrumental in putting women's needs and concerns at the apex of the peacebuilding continuum, including in conflict prevention, resolution and post-conflict reconstruction, highlighting issues of Gender-Based Violence (GBV), displacement, and human rights abuses. West Africa has made notable progress in advancing the WPS agenda by promoting gender equality and women's empowerment across the four core pillars: Participation, Protection, Prevention and Relief & Recovery.

Research has shown that women's involvement in peace negotiations leads to more durable and inclusive peace agreements, with a higher likelihood of including provisions for women's rights[1]. However, persistent structural and contextual challenges continue to impede

> " "Research has shown that women's involvement in peace negotiations leads to more durable and inclusive peace agreements, with a higher likelihood of including provisions for women's rights. However, persistent structural and contextual challenges continue to impede full realisation of the WPS agenda...."

full realisation of the WPS agenda. This report provides an overview of the progress achieved, the critical role played by the West Africa Network for Peacebuilding (WANEP), as well as the key challenges, recommendations, and emerging opportunities to strengthen implementation of the WPS agenda across the region in the next 25 years.

In terms of progress, West Africa currently has the highest number of National Action Plans (NAPs), with 14 out of 15 countries having NAPs at various stages of implementation. Nigeria has taken a lead with the development of Local Action Plans (LAPs) to ensure

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[1] *Marie O'Reilly, Andrea Ó Súilleabháin, and Thania Paffenholz,*
"Reimagining Peacemaking: Women's Roles in Peace Processes" (2015). Women's participation and a better understanding of the political. https://www.ipinst.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/06/IPI-E-pub-Reimagining-Peacemaking.pdf

greater participation and ownership at the community level. National Action Plans play a key role in the implementation of the WPS agenda. They help translate global commitments into country-specific actions by outlining clear priorities, assigning responsibilities, developing tracking tools and allocating the needed resources to ensure effective implementation. In addition, the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) has developed a Regional Action Plan on WPS and other mechanisms that have highlighted regional focus and guided countries in the formulation and implementation of their national action plans around the four pillars of Resolution 1325.

The Participation Pillar of Resolution 1325 focuses on increasing women's representation and involvement in decision-making processes, including in national, regional and international institutions, and in mechanisms for the prevention, management and resolution of conflict. This laudable venture was achieved through consistent advocacy to institutionalise gender quotas, and supportive legal frameworks that have increased women's representation in parliaments across West Africa. In Benin for instance, women's representation in national parliament increased from 7.2% (2015/19) to 26.6% currently; Sierra Leone – 12.3% in 2018 to 29.5% (2021); Senegal – 40% with consistently high levels of female representation in the last three legislatures.

Cape Verde – ranks first in West Africa, progressing from 23.0% in 2016 to 37.5% in 2021, and now stands at 44.4%.

Women are also becoming increasingly visible in peace talks and mediation processes both in formal and informal settings. They have not only asserted their influence on the outcomes of peace negotiations, but a few have also taken on leadership roles in mediation efforts. A clear example is Her Excellency Aja Fatoumata C.M. Jallow-Tambajang, former Vice President of The Gambia, who led the joint mediation mission facilitated by the African Union, ECOWAS, and the Commonwealth, following the contested outcome of the 24 June 2023 elections in Sierra Leone.[2] These efforts significantly defused prevailing tensions between the government of Sierra Leone and the All-People's Congress (APC).

The security sector has equally witnessed increased representation of women in the military, police, and peacekeeping missions, reflecting progress toward inclusive security institutions. A notable example is Ghana's steady progress in promoting women's participation in the armed forces and peacekeeping missions by deliberately mainstreaming gender perspectives into its national policy frameworks. Ghana allocates 15% recruitment quota for women in armed forces[3] and currently ranks first in West Africa and sixth in the world among countries with the highest number of women deployed in UN peacekeeping missions.[4]

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[2] African Union (2023). Statement by the African Union (AU), the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), and the Commonwealth on the Commencement of a Mediation Process between the Government of Sierra Leone and the All Peoples Congress (APC) Party, https://www.peaceau.org/en/article/statement-by-the-african-union-au-the-economic-community-of-west-african-states-ecowas-and-the-commonwealth-on-the-commencement-of-a-mediation-process-between-the-government-of-sierra-leone-and-the-all-peoples-congress-apc-party#:~:text=The%20Mediation%20is%20led%20by,could%20jeopardize%20the%20mediation%20process.
[3] Ghana Armed Forces MOWIP REPORT (2020). Results of the measuring opportunities for women in peace operations (mowip) assessment. https://www.dcaf.ch/sites/default/files/publications/documents/Ghana_Armed_Forces_2020_MOWIP_Report.pdf
[4] UN (2023).Uniformed Personnel Contributing Countries by Ranking, https://peacekeeping.un.org/sites/default/files/02_country_ranking_82_january_2025.pdf

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"Perhaps, the most compelling achievements in protecting women and girls against SGBV is the establishment of One Stop Centres and the Peace Huts model across the region. The One-Stop Centres have significantly strengthened both preventive and protective measures against GBV, offering survivors easier access to support in a more comprehensive and coordinated manner...."

Under the Protection Pillar, Resolution 1325 stipulates the protection of women and girls from Sexual and Gender-Based Violence (SGBV), including in armed conflicts, emergency and humanitarian situations. In this regard, most ECOWAS Member States have enacted laws to combat GBV, backed by regional efforts and civil society advocacy. Others have also revised their legal frameworks to criminalise GBV, further reinforcing protection and accountability. In 2023, the Sierra Leone Ministry of Gender and Children's Affairs, with support from the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), launched the GBV Information Management System Plus (GBVIMS+), making

Sierra Leone the first country outside a humanitarian context to adopt such system.[5] The GBVIMS+ enhances the collection, analysis, and use of GBV data to improve case management, service delivery for survivors and inform policy development.[6]

Perhaps, the most compelling achievements in protecting women and girls against SGBV is the establishment of One Stop Centres and the Peace Huts model across the region. The One-Stop Centers have significantly strengthened both preventive and protective measures against GBV, offering survivors easier access to support in a more comprehensive and coordinated manner. WANEP's Peace Huts and other community-based mechanisms have proven to be sustainable, scalable models for protection against GBV, survivor support, and women's empowerment. Moreover, some countries have put in place strategies to strengthen the response system, ensuring more inclusive support through the introduction of toll-free helplines to facilitate case reporting, referrals, and survivors' assistance in local languages. In addition, the establishment of the first Sexual Offences Model Court in Sierra Leone offer survivors legal, medical, and psychosocial support, thereby improving their access to justice and protection services.

[5] International Monetary Fund. African Dept (2024). *Combatting Gender-Based Violence and Fostering Development.*
https://www.elibrary.imf.org/view/journals/002/2024/322/article-A007-en.xml#:~:text=4.,and%20in%20promoting%20gender%20equality
[6] *Ibid*

The Prevention Pillar is focused on preventing all forms of violence against women, especially sexual and gender-based violence and strengthening their rights as the precursor for achieving women's total peace. In this regard, gender perspectives were integrated into ECOWAS Early Warning System (ECOWARN), supported by WANEP under a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU). At the national level, states have adopted laws to prevent GBV and have also set up National Centres for Coordination of Early Warning and Response Mechanism (NCCRM) with support from ECOWAS. These efforts have facilitated early detection and response to violence risks in a gender-responsive approach. At the community level, women have also played a central role in prevention actions. Some have joined local peace committees, using these platforms to raise awareness of non-violence, facilitate community dialogues and mediate conflicts to prevent escalation.

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A key provision of the Relief and Recovery pillar is the integration of gender perspectives into peace negotiations and post-conflict processes, including during repatriation, resettlement, rehabilitation and reconstruction. The objective is to ensure that these processes respond to the security and socio-economic needs of women and girls, especially those affected by conflicts. A few countries in the region that have undergone these processes have designed rehabilitation programmes for ex-combatants, including women and girls, though these efforts remain limited. In Niger, for example, a total of 369 people, including 307 men, 21 women and 41 children, benefited from such a programme in 2025.[7] Some beneficiaries have joined national armed forces while others received support for income generating activities.[8] On the other hand, truth and reconciliation mechanisms such as transitional justice processes are increasingly recognising women's lived experiences in times of conflict, contributing to healing, justice, and sustainable peace.

The relief and recovery pillar is also relevant in the context of natural disasters and environmental challenges such as climate change. In this perspective, some countries, including Ghana, have developed gender sensitive national strategies to prevent and respond to natural disasters and build community resilience. Civil society organisations (CSOs) have also played a key role under this pillar. Several have carried out actions to support survivors of GBV through mobile legal clinics, facilitating access to services by women in remote areas. In addition, WANEP's thematic

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8 *Safae Fathi (2025). Niger integrates ex-combatants into the army after training.* https://africa-eye.com/fr/2025/10/15/le-niger-integre-des-ex-combattants-dans-larmee-apres-formation/
9 *Ibid.*

reports and policy briefs on climate change and environmental challenges have helped guide policy responses at regional, national and community levels. Other initiatives to address the effects of climate change have reduced the vulnerability of populations, especially women, to drought and food insecurity and have strengthened their roles in local committees for preventing and responding to the effects of climate change.

Despite these successes, the effective implementation of the WPS agenda in West Africa faces persistent and emerging challenges. Disparities remain across the region in terms of implementation and impact, including inadequate funding, insufficient coordination and implementation of national action plans, and a lack of accountability. Furthermore, increasing politicisation of gender issues, ongoing impact of climate change, pandemics and the expansion of violent extremism in the region pose significant threats to the agenda's progress. These interconnected challenges, underscore the need for a renewed commitment to holistic, inclusive, well-resourced and coordinated WPS implementation strategies that reflect the lived realities of women and girls.

Recommendations and Way Forward

The report emphasises the need for a strategic rethinking of WPS implementation over the next two decades, guided by the following priorities:

1. Bridge the gap between policy and practice by instilling political will, strengthening accountability, and enabling women's meaningful participation in peace and security processes.

2. Reposition women's participation as a security imperative across all peace and security interventions, including counter-terrorism strategies, transitional governance and security sector reforms, as a core security investment.
3. Shift WPS from protection only to prosperity-based prevention and promoting women's economic empowerment as a pillar of peacebuilding.
4. Ensure sustainable and flexible financing, including the establishment of a dedicated WPS Trust Fund.
5. Ensure the WPS agenda, is locally grounded, addressing the specific security challenges faced by women and girls in their communities and implementing actions in local languages.
6. Implement WPS Agenda as an integrated agenda, mainstreamed into national development plans across sectors, including governance, security, climate action and humanitarian response to strengthen ownership, policy coherence and maximise resources and impact in the context of dwindling financial support.
7. Tackle patriarchal norms and gender inequalities by reforming discriminatory customary laws and creating platforms for exchange and dialogue with all key actors: traditional authorities, religious leaders, men, women, etc.
8. Promote intergenerational solidarity by fostering mentorship and leadership development and establish safe spaces where women and young peacebuilders can sustain their advocacy and drive the WPS agenda.
9. Strengthen data systems and monitor frameworks to enable evidence-based policymaking and accountability on WPS.

10. Enhance coordination and partnerships among governments, civil society, private sector, regional bodies and international partners to maximise impact and ensure sustainability.

Prospects and Opportunities

The African Union Convention on Ending Violence Against Women and Girls (2025) presents a historic policy instrument for advancing accountability and protection at national and regional levels. It therefore reinforces the implementation of the WPS agenda, particularly under the prevention and protection pillars. Additionally, technological innovations and digital advocacy platforms can enhance data collection, amplify women's voices, and strengthen regional coordination. The 25th anniversary of UNSCR 1325 also coincides with renewed reviews of NAPs and peacebuilding frameworks, creating opportunity to integrate lessons learned from the implementation of the resolution over the past 25 years, particularly with regard to the financing of the agenda, monitoring and the establishment of more inclusive mechanisms.

Organisations such as WANEP present a legacy and a peculiar network structure that position them as strategic partners at global, continental, regional, national and community levels to sustain the momentum of the WPS agenda in West Africa, linking grassroots realities to policy influence and ensuring that women's participation is not symbolic but transformative. As the region reflects on 25 years of implementation, the path forward must prioritise inclusive leadership, structural accountability, and sustainable peacebuilding anchored in gender equality and justice.

Methodology and Limitation

This report focuses on the West Africa region with specific country-level examples included for illustrations. It is based on a combination of desk research and semi structured questionnaires administered across WANEP's 15 National Networks operating in the 15 countries across the region.

Drawing on over 25 years of collaboration with Gender Ministries and relevant State agencies in their respective countries, these networks provided both national-level insights and detailed information on WANEP's contribution to the implementation of the WPS agenda in the region. The data collection employed both quantitative and qualitative methods, utilising a mix of primary and secondary sources. The information gathered was rigorously analysed and cross-checked with additional sources to ensure its accuracy and relevance.

However, this report is limited by the absence of focus group discussions and Key Informant Interviews (KIIs), which could have further enriched the data and analysis.

Introduction

"

"The West Africa Network for Peacebuilding (WANEP) has played a central and pioneering role in translating UNSCR 1325 commitments into actionable, community-based interventions. Through its Women, Peace and Security Programme and extensive network across the West Africa region, WANEP has continued to advance the WPS agenda through multi-level interventions under the four pillars of the framework..."

The peace and security landscape of most West African countries, over the years, has witnessed growing challenges of armed insurgencies, the proliferation of arms, protracted chieftaincy and communal conflicts, gun violence and armed robbery, kidnapping, piracy, and illegal mining. Though these conflicts are not gender-specific, they affect women and girls differently than men. Women and children are often victims of displacement, deaths, discrimination, and social exclusion. This situation predisposes them to gender-based violence, especially rape and sexual assault, often resulting in trauma and psychosocial disorder. However, despite the adverse effects of violent conflicts on women and young girls, they are grossly underrepresented or excluded from decision making and peace processes, meaning that their specific needs and voices are excluded in policy design and implementation, in response to the various challenges. This exclusion contributes to amplify and heighten existing gender inequalities, thereby widening the gap with regard to women's efforts and participation in governance and peacebuilding.

To address these challenges, the United Nations Security Council (UNSCR), adopted on 31 October 2000, Resolution 1325, which acknowledges the important role of women in peace processes. The Resolution further urges member States to develop national policies to support women's inclusive participation in peace and decision-making processes to ensure sustainable peace. It also underscores the need to reduce the socio-economic and humanitarian impact of conflict on women and girls, as part of their recovery process. Subsequent resolutions have been adopted and forming together with Resolution 1325, the foundation of the WPS agenda.

In alignment with these resolutions, the African Union (AU) and ECOWAS adopted complementary frameworks, notably the Continental Results Framework (CRF) on WPS (2018), to enhance coordination, monitoring, and implementation across member states. ECOWAS also adopted a Gender Policy (2004), as well as a Regional Plan of Action on WPS, and an integrated WPS component into its Conflict Prevention Framework.

The region, through these frameworks, made the commitments[9]: (i) To increase leadership and engagement of women in national and regional institutions and mechanisms for prevention, management and resolution of conflict in West Africa; (ii) To strengthen women's role and contribution in conflict prevention, resolution, peacebuilding and humanitarian initiatives in West Africa; and (iii) For Women to play more active roles in peace operations as troops, police and civilian staff, while ensuring that gender parity is mainstreamed in decision-making, planning and implementation of ECOWAS Peace Security Operations and a resultant reduction in incidences.

Twenty-five years on, the transformative impact of Resolution 1325 on women's participation, protection, and leadership in peace and security processes continue to dominate global, international and national discourse. In West Africa, Resolution 1325 has been instrumental in shaping policies, frameworks, and practices that recognise women not only as victims of conflict but as active agents of peace, reconciliation, and security governance. Over the years, countries in the region have demonstrated commitment to this agenda through the development of NAPs, institutional reforms, and strategic partnerships with civil society organisations (CSOs), regional bodies, and international partners.

The West Africa Network for Peacebuilding (WANEP) has played a central and pioneering role in translating UNSCR 1325 commitments into actionable, community-based interventions. Through its Women, Peace and Security Programme and extensive network across the region, WANEP continued to advance the WPS agenda through multi-level interventions under the four pillars of the framework: Participation, Protection, Prevention, and Relief & Recovery. Under these pillars, the organisation has championed women's inclusion in peace processes, supported survivors of GBV, and fostered the economic and psychosocial resilience of women and girls affected by conflict and natural disasters. Its work has also been critical in integrating gender perspectives into early warning systems, conflict prevention, and peacebuilding policy frameworks at both national and regional levels.

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[9] *ECOWAS (2017). Plans of Action for the 15 Components of the ECOWAS Conflict Prevention Framework.*
https://wpsfocalpointsnetwork.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/07/ECPF-Action-Plans-2018-2020-ENG-1.pdf

This report, titled 'Women Leading Transformational Change: A review of UNSCR 1325 @25 in West Africa' contributes to the ongoing global reflection on 25 years of WPS implementation, offering a regional perspective that highlights both achievements and limitations. It also identifies emerging opportunities, offers strategic recommendations based on lessons learned, and proposes pathways for sustaining the WPS agenda in West Africa in light of current and future peace and security dynamics. Ultimately the report calls for renewed political commitment, sustainable financing, and inclusive partnerships to ensure that women in West Africa continue to play decisive roles in peacebuilding and governance as envisioned by UNSCR 1325 and also reinforced by Sustainable Development Goal 5, the African Union Agenda 2063 and ECOWAS Vision 2050.

Women
Leading

SECTION 1:
PROGRESS AND KEY ACHIEVEMENTS OF WPS AGENDA IN WEST AFRICA

The implementation of UNSCR 1325 has strengthened legislation on women, peace and security, promoted women's meaningful participation in peace and security processes and supported the operationalisation of WPS platforms for sustained advocacy and policy influence. These gains are further reinforced by the growing pool of WPS expertise across the region.

1.1.   Enhanced Legislation on WPS

1.1.1. Promoting Inclusivity through NAPs

The West African region has made notable strides in promoting women's leadership and meaningful inclusion in peace processes through the development of National Action Plans for the implementation of Resolution 1325. Fourteen member states now have National Action Plans (NAPs); eleven of these countries have developed second generation NAPs, while four countries, viz; Mali, Nigeria, Sierra Leone and Togo, have advanced to their third generation of NAPs. (see Table 1 below).

	Benin	B.Faso	Cape V.	Côte d'Ivoire	The Gambia	Ghana	Guinea	Guinea Bissau	Liberia	Mali	Niger	Nigeria	Sene	Sierra L..	Togo
1st NAP	2016-2021	2013-2016	✗	2008-2012	2021-2025	2012-2015	2009-2013	2010-2011	2009-2013	2012-2014	2016-2018	2013-2016	2012-2015	2010-2014	2011-2016
2nd NAP	✗	✗	✗	2024-2028	✗	2020-2025	2024-2028	2021-2024	2019-2023	2015-2017	2020-2024	2017-2020	2020-2024	2019-2023	2021-2024
3rd NAP	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	2019-2023	✗	Drafted	✗	2024-2029	2025-2029

Table 1: Status on NAPs in West Africa.
Source: RedNacional de Mujeres, complemented by desk research, visualised by WANEP

NAPs played a critical role in raising awareness on women's vital role in peacebuilding and in improving understanding of the WPS agenda. This enlightenment, particularly among women groups, fuelled effective advocacy that has translated into concrete commitments by Member States. Many legal and policy reforms promoting inclusive peace and governance processes have been inspired by the implementation of NAPs.

In Ghana, for example, the second-generation NAP (2020–2025) prioritised advocacy for an Affirmative Action Law and greater representation of women in national institutions such as the National Peace Council (NPC)[10]. This advocacy led to the successful passage of the Affirmative Action Bill in 2024, which mandates at least 30% female representation in decision-making roles, with the aim of achieving full gender parity by 2034[11]. Noticeable progress has also been made at the National Peace Council, with an increased representation of women in the Institution's Governing Board, moving from 7% in 2019 to 23% currently.[12]

Similarly, Côte d'Ivoire in its first NAP (2008–2012), made provisions to address GBV by strengthening legal frameworks to better protect women and girls.[13] Through consistent advocacy, the revised Ivorian Penal Code, enacted in December 2021, now criminalises various forms of GBV, including physical, psychological, and verbal violence,[14] with penalties ranging from fines to imprisonment depending on the gravity of the offense. The law also requires judicial police to promptly interview survivors of GBV, ensuring timely evidence collection with the aim to reduce impunity and improve access to justice. Also, in 2021, a bill to eliminate the requirement of a medical certificate for filing complaints related to sexual, gender-based violence was introduced in Parliament. The passage of this bill will be a significant step in survivors' protection and in removing administrative and financial barriers to access justice.

Previously, victims were often deterred from reporting abuse due to the high cost of the certificate. The proposed bill shifts financial burden to the state, ensuring that medical examinations are covered by judicial authorities when ordered by a judge or prosecutor. Ghana and Côte d'Ivoire are just two examples of how the effective implementation of national action plans drive meaningful legal and institutional reforms in support of the WPS agenda across the region.

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[10] Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection (2020).Ghana National Action Plan for Implementation of UNSCR 1325 on WPS, GHANAP II. https://www.wpsnaps.org/app/uploads/2021/01/Ghana-NAP-2-2020-2025.pdf

[11] GNA (2024). Passage of Affirmative Action Bill: UN Special Representative commends Ghana. myjoyonline.com/passage-of-affirmative-action-bill-un-special-representative-commends-ghana/

[12] George Amoh, Executive Secretary (2022). https://www.peacecouncil.gov.gh/2022/03/press-statement-for-immediate-release-international-womens-day/

[13] Ministry of the Family, Women and Social Affairs Côte d'Ivoire. National action plan for the implementation of resolution 1325 of the security council (2008-2012). https://www.peacewomen.org/assets/file/NationalActionPlans/cotedivoire_nationalactionplan_january2007.pdf

[14] Code Pénal Ivoirien (2021). Loi-n-2021-893-du-21-decembre-2021-modifiant-la-loi-n2019-574-du-26-juin-2019-portant-code-penal (https://loidici.biz/2022/02/08/loi-n-2021-893-du-21-decembre-2021-modifiant-la-loi-n2019-574-du-26-juin-2019-portant-code-penal/lois-article-par-article/codes/le-code-penal/22836/naty/

1.1.2. Legal and Policy Reforms for Gender Parity

Many countries have taken specific measures to enhance women's representation and participation in governance systems and decision-making processes. While some countries opted for quota laws (Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, the Gambia, etc), or reserved seats (Benin), others chose a more ambitious target, opting for parity laws (Senegal, Guinea). Meanwhile, Liberia, Nigeria, The Gambia and Togo are yet to adopt such measures.

West African Countries with Temporary Special Measures (Quota/Parity/Reserved Seats Systems) to Achieve Gender Equality

Country ▲	Legal Provision	Target for women representation in decision making roles
Benin	Article 144 of the 2019 Electoral Code	24/109 Reserved Seats
Burkina Faso	Law N°003-2020/AN of January 22, 2020	30%
Cape Verde	Law N° 68/IX/2019 of November 28, 2019	40%
Côte d'Ivoire	LAW N° 2019-870 of October 14, 2019	30%
Ghana	Affirmative Action (Gender Equity) Act, 2024 (Act 1121)	30%
Guinea	Law N° 2019/0011/AN of May 2, 2019	50%
Guinea-Bissau	Law N° 4/2018	36%
Liberia	No Legal Provision	N/A
Mali	Law N° 2015-052 of December 18, 2015	30%
Niger	Law N° 2019-69 amending Law N° 2000-08 Of June 07, 2000	25%
Nigeria	No Legal Provision	No Legislated target
Senegal	Law No. 2010-11 of May 28, 2010	50%
Sierra leone	The Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment Act 2022 (effective June 24, 2023)	30%
The Gambia	No Legal Provision	No Legislated target
Togo	No Legal Provision	No Legislated target

Table 2: West African Countries with Temporary Special Measures to Achieve Gender Equality

These laws or policies in some countries yielded positive results by increasing women's representation in national parliaments. Cape Verde and Senegal are good examples with 44 and 41 percent of women's representation in parliament, respectively (See Table 2).

1.2. WPS Capacity and Expertise Entrenched across West Africa

A strategic priority in most National Action Plans (NAPs) has been to close capacity gaps in Women, Peace and Security (WPS), particularly among women's groups and networks. This has driven the rollout of structured capacity building initiatives aimed at equipping women with the knowledge and skills to engage meaningfully in peace processes at Track I, II, and III levels. These programmes have enhanced women's competencies in dialogue, mediation, negotiation, peacekeeping, community engagement, and advocacy, resulting in a growing pool of WPS expertise across all areas of peacebuilding.

A key objective of the WPS agenda across board is to improve women's participation in formal peace processes at all levels. In line with this, the African Union (AU) Assembly of Heads of States and Governments launched in July 2017, FemWise-Africa, a network that supports capacity building and advocacy

for women's inclusive participation in mediation efforts across the continent.[15] By 2020, FemWise-Africa has registered and trained 462 women[16]. Some of these trained women were deployed on AU, ECOWAS and other Regional Economic Communities' (RECs) election observation or peace missions[17]. Speaking at the 3rd General Assembly meeting of FemWise-Africa, on 26 November 2019, in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, the Commissioner for Peace and Security, Ambassador Smaïl Chergui described this venture as 'a major milestone.' He stated that: "one of our greatest achievements has been the long-term deployment of three FemWise members to support the AU Liaison Offices in Sudan and South Sudan respectively. FemWise is the only Network of Women mediators globally, that has deployed members on a long-term basis to support formal peace processes"[18].

At the national level, efforts have also contributed to enhanced capacity and visibility of women's leadership across sectors, including peace and security. Countries such as Benin, Côte d'Ivoire, and Guinea have developed compendiums of skilled women leaders[19]. In Côte d'Ivoire for example, the Compendium, officially launched in October 2011,[20] has registered over 14,000 women from diverse sectors, all social and professional backgrounds, including peace and security.[21] This provided platform for visibility and confidence building, resulting in an increased nomination and participation of women in leadership roles and in governance. A total of 328 women were registered in the 2016 legislative elections as candidates, as against only 105 recorded in 2011, demonstrating increasing self-confidence and support for women's political participation. Other tangible results include the appointment of a number of the registered members of the compendium in public institutions (30% of the members of the National Economic and Social Council and 21 % of the members of Government),[22] as of 2017.

1.3. Operationalisation of WPS Platforms for Sustained Advocacy and Policy Influencing

The Women, Peace and Security platforms are instrumental in institutionalising women's meaningful participation and leadership in peace and security processes and advancing gender-responsive peacebuilding and policy dialogue across West Africa.

[15] Camille Vern (2024). Bringing women to the table. The evolution of FemWise-Africa https://www.accord.org.za/analysis/bringing-women-to-the-table-the-evolution-of-femwise-africa/
[16] FEMWISE Quarterly Newsletter Volume 1. https://www.peaceau.org/uploads/femwise-africa-newsletter-first-volume-first-issue.pdf
[17] Ibid.
[18] Ambassador Smaïl Chergui (2019). Remarks by the Commissioner for Peace and Security, Ambassador Smaïl Chergui, at the 3rd General Assembly meeting of the Femwise-Africa. https://www.aupaps.org/en/article/remarks-by-the-commissioner-for-peace-and-security-ambassador-smail-chergui-at-the-3rd-general-assembly-meeting-of-the-femwise-africa-26-november-2019-addis-ababa-ethiopia
[19] Bruno FANUCCHI (2023). COCOFGUI / La Guinée mise sur les « compétences féminines » pour refonder la Nation et relancer l'économie. https://www.africapresse.paris/COCOFGUI-La-Guinee-mise-sur-les-competences-feminines-pour-refonder-la-Nation?lang=fr
[20] COCOFCI (2022). Les 10 ans: du Compendium des Compétences Féminines de Côte Ivoire (COCOFCI).. https://competencesfeminines.gouv.ci/detail_actu.php?num=79&lang=
[21] COCOFCI (2017). Results of 2017: The compendium of women's competences in Côte d'Ivoire is satisfied with its 2017 results. https://competencesfeminines.gouv.ci/detail_actu.php?num=31&lang=en
[22] Maurice Mboula Jean-Claude Didier Enguélégué (2017). Women's political participation and representation in Côte d'Ivoire. https://www.idea.int/news/womens-political-participation-and-representation-cote-divoire#:~:text=Secondly%2C%20the%20mechanism's%20efficiency%2C%20which,enhancement%20of%20women's%20occupational%20integration

At the regional and national levels, platforms such as the Network on Peace and Security for Women in the ECOWAS Region (NOPSWECO), the West African Network of Young Women Leaders (ROAJELF), the African Women Leaders' Network (AWLN), the UNOWAS Working Group on Women, Youth, Peace and Security (UN-WGWYPS), and the National Women Coalitions (NWC) in Burkina Faso, Mali, Niger, and Côte d'Ivoire, have played a pivotal role in advancing the WPS agenda in the region. These platforms provided critical spaces for states and non-state actors to lead sustained advocacy for gender-responsive and inclusive policies. They also enabled women to engage meaningfully in political processes at all levels, ensuring that their specific needs, experiences, and priorities are addressed in peacebuilding and post-conflict reconstruction efforts.

At the community level, Community Women Mediators (CWM), in Togo, Benin, Burkina Faso, Niger, Nigeria, and Guinea provided secured spaces for dialogue and conflict resolution. These platforms helped to reduce tensions, address root causes of local conflicts, and expand women's roles in peacebuilding. Direct engagements with state and non-state actors, allowed the mediators to negotiate unfettered access to essential services and improved livelihoods for women and girls in humanitarian contexts.

Additionally, the Peace Huts in Liberia, Senegal, and Côte d'Ivoire, have strengthened community resilience, broken cultural silences around GBV, and empowered survivors to seek justice. These mechanisms have contributed to a notable reduction in community conflicts and increased women's engagement in peacebuilding. Furthermore, the engagement of men as allies played a strategic role in reshaping societal norms and influencing institutional reforms across the region. Through the HeForShe campaign, several countries have established national platforms and identified male champions committed to ending GBV and promoting women's leadership. Intergenerational platforms are also emerging as a force for transformational change. By linking experienced women leaders with youth through mentorship and dialogue, and by integrating digital tools and innovation in their actions, these platforms are expanding the reach and sustainability of the WPS agenda.

SECTION 2:
PRIORITIES AND COMMITMENTS ACROSS UNSCR 1325 PILLARS

Across the region progress on the implementation of the WPS agenda has been recorded across the four pillars of Participation, Protection, Prevention, and Relief and Recovery. However, some pillars, particularly, Participation have received more attention and investment compared to the Relief and Recovery Pillar. More women are assuming leadership positions in parliaments, the security sector, and in peace negotiations. These gains, while uneven, demonstrate growing recognition of women as vital agents of peace and governance.

2.1. Participation Pillar

What Participation Pillar Says:
This pillar calls for increased participation of women at all levels of decision making, including in national, regional and international institutions, in mechanisms for the prevention, management and resolution of conflict, in peace negotiations and operations, as soldiers, police and civilians and as Special Representatives of the UN Secretary-General.

2.1.1 Women in National Parliaments

The adoption of quota systems, parity laws, and reserved seat mechanisms in many countries have increased women's representation in national parliaments in recent years. For instance, in Benin, women's representation in the Parliament stood at 7.2% in both the 2015 and 2019 legislatures (see table 3 below). However, the situation changed significantly following the introduction of reserved seats for women as stipulated under the 2019 Electoral Code, which, mandated the allocation of 24 out of the 109 seats in the National Assembly for female candidates.[23] As a result, the proportion of women in the current legislature rose to 26.6% as seen in table 3 below.

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[23] *IPU, Benin, Assemblée Nationale, Article 144 du Code Electoral de 2019. https://data.ipu.org/fr/parliament/BJ/BJ-LC01/data-on-women/*

Other notable examples include Sierra Leone, where the proportion of women in national parliament increased from 12.3% in 2018 to 29.5% following the adoption of a quota law in 2021 (see table 3). Cape Verde, which currently ranks first in West Africa in terms of women's parliamentary representation, has also made substantial progress.

The percentage of women in its National Assembly rose from 23.0% in 2016 to 37.5% in 2021 and now stands at 44.4% (See figure 1 and table 3). Senegal has maintained consistently high levels of female representation in the last three legislatures, with women holding over 40% of seats in the National Assembly (see table 3). These figures demonstrate strong evidence of progress in advancing women's representation in national parliaments across the region.
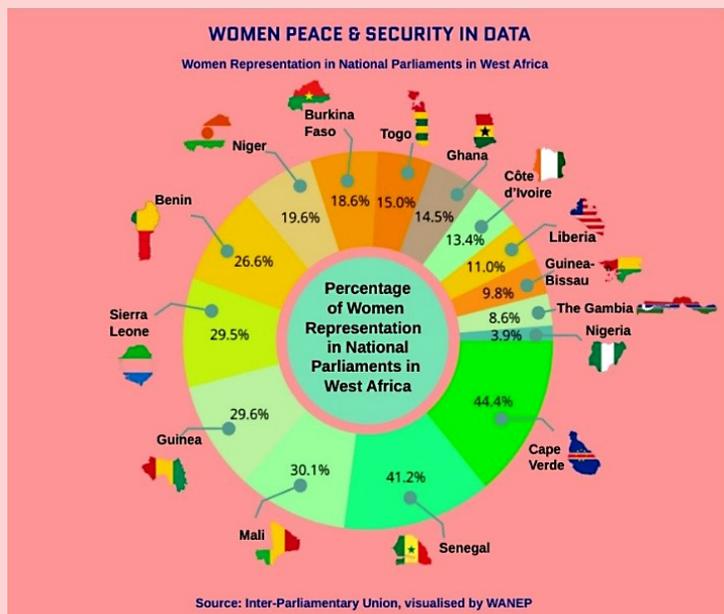

Figure 1: Current Representation of Women in National Parliaments

Table 3: Women's Representation in National Parliaments over the Past Two Legislatures

Trend on Women's Representation in National Parliaments in West Africa

Country	Legislated target for women's representation	Representation of women in the past two legislatures		Current Representation of women
Benin	Reserved Seats 24/109	7.2% (2015)	7.2% (2019)	26.6%
Burkina Faso	30%	6.3% (2020)	16.9% (2022)	18.3%
Cape Verde	40%	23.0% (2016)	37.5% (2021)	44.4%
Côte d'Ivoire	30%	11.4% (2016)	14.2% (2021)	13.4%
The Gambia	No legislated target	7.5% (2012)	10.3% (2017)	8.6%
Ghana	30%	12.7% (2016)	14.5% (2020)	14.5%
Guinea	50%	21.9% (2013)	14.9% (2020)	29.6%
Guinea-Bissau	36%	13.7% (2014)	13.7% (2019)	9.8%
Liberia	No legislated target	10.96% (2011)	12.3% (2017)	11.0%
Mali	30%	8.8% (2013)	26.4% (2020 Dec)	30.1%
Niger	25%	14.6% (2016)	25.9% (2020)	19.6%
Nigeria	No legislated target	5.6% (2015)	3.4% (2019)	3.9%
Senegal	50%	41.8% (2017)	44.2% (2022)	41.2%
Sierra Leone	30%	12.4% (2012)	12.3% (2018)	29.5%
Togo	No legislated target	15.4% (2013)	16.5% (2018)	15.0%

Source: IPU. Visualised by WANEP • Created with Datawrapper

2.1.2 Women in Security Sector

The adoption of resolution 1325 accelerated the inclusion of women in the security sector, particularly, in the field of defense. This is because the resolution, promotes inclusive gender-responsive policies and practices that address the specific needs and concerns of women, thereby removing barriers to women's leadership and participation in decision-making, peace and security.

For instance, the Senegal National Strategy for Gender Equality and Equity (SNEEG), adopted in 2005,[24] has been instrumental in setting priority actions for women's inclusion in the security sector. Prior to this, women were not recruited as troops[25] into the Senegalese armed forces, they could only serve as medical personnel.[26] Following consistent advocacy, the Senegalese President Abdoulaye Wade authorised recruitment of women into the armed forces in 2008, as part of the troops. Subsequently, the Armed Forces developed a 10-year Sectoral Strategy on gender in 2012, which contributed to reduce gender disparities in the army and enhanced women's representation and participation in the security sector.

Similarly, Women's inclusion in the Ghana Armed Forces (GAF) is guided by provisions of the Armed Forces Act and Regulations and other key national policy frameworks such as the Ghana National Gender Policy (2015) and the Ghana National Action Plan on Resolution 1325. The Armed Forces has consistently implemented a recruitment quota that allocates 15% of positions to women.[27] A significant milestone was reached in March 2016, when the first female officer was promoted to the rank of Brigadier General.[28] With the adoption of its gender policy in 2024, the Ghana Armed Forces is set to achieve a target of 25% female representation in the sector by 2028.[29]

At the International levels, Ghana has proudly raised the flag of West Africa by deploying a significant number of women in the UN peacekeeping missions. As of January 2025, Ghana ranks sixth globally and first in West Africa, among the top contributors to UN peacekeeping operations,[30] surpassing the UN mandatory quota of 9% female representation in peacekeeping missions.[31]

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[24] *Stratégie Nationale pour l'Egalité et l'Equité de Genre (2005). https://www.sante.gouv.sn/sites/default/files/sneeg%281%29_0.pdf*
[25] *Miranda Gaanderse (DCAF)-2010. Security for All: West Africa's Good Practices on Gender in the Security Sector. https://gisf.ngo/wp-content/uploads/2020/02/0115-Gaanderse-2010-Security-for-all-West-Africa%E2%80%99s-good-practices-on-gender-in-the-security-sector.pdf*
[26] *Ibid.*
[27] *Ghana Armed Forces (2020). Results of the Measuring Opportunities for Women in Peace Operations (Mowip) Assessment https://www.dcaf.ch/sites/default/files/publications/documents/Ghana_Armed_Forces_2020_MOWIP_Report.pdf*
[28] *https://www.dcaf.ch/sites/default/files/publications/documents/Ghana_Armed_Forces_2020_MOWIP_Report.pdf*
[29] *ADF (2025). Ghana Armed Forces Pushes for More Women in Upper Ranks https://adf-magazine.com/2025/01/ghana-armed-forces-pushes-for-more-women-in-upper-ranks/*
[30] *UN (2023).Uniformed Personnel Contributing Countries by Ranking, https://peacekeeping.un.org/sites/default/files/02_country_ranking_82_january_2025.pdf*
[31] *Security Women (2023). Ghana Armed Forces reaches 19% female deployment in peacekeeping operations. https://www.securitywomen.org/post/ghana-armed-forces-reaches-19-female-deployment-in-peacekeeping-operations*

Cross-section of women in the Ghana Armed Forces serving in the UN Peacekeeping Mission.

Source: Class FM Online

2.1.3. Women in Transitional Governments

Burkina Faso, Mali, Niger, and Guinea, are currently undergoing political transitions following the recent wave of Unconstitutional Change in Government (UCG) sweeping through West Africa with its attendant instability and political turmoil. Consequently, interim government structures have been entrenched in these countries to guide the establishment of constitutional order and political stability. An analysis of women's representation in these transitional governments, reveals modest progress.

Women representation in Mali transitional governments fluctuated over the years. The government of President Bah N'Daw, formed in October 2020 had 4 women out of 25 ministers representing 16%[32]. This number later increased to 6 women out of 29 ministers (approximately 21.4%) in the June 2021 government led by Prime Minister Choguel Maïga,[33] before declining to 17.9% in the current administration (See figure 2).

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[32] *Security Council (2020). Situation in Mali.*
https://documents.un.org/doc/undoc/gen/n20/365/36/pdf/n2036536.pdf?utm_source=chatgpt.com
[33] *Security Council (2021). Situation in Mali*
https://documents.un.org/doc/undoc/gen/n21/259/21/pdf/n2125921.pdf?utm_source=chatgpt.com
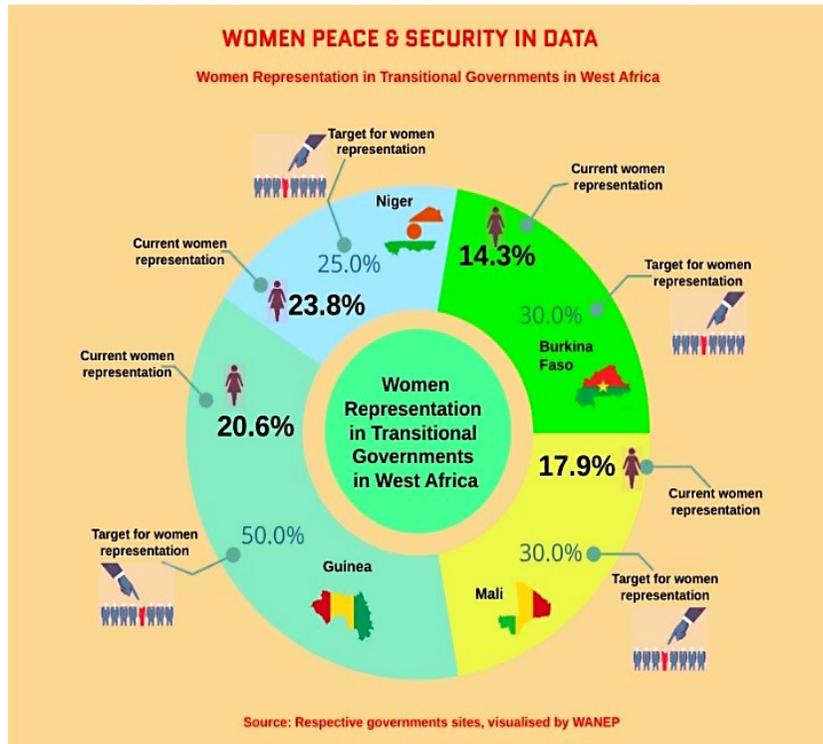
Figure 2: Women's Representation in Transitional Governments in West Africa

2.1.4. Women in Negotiation and Mediation Efforts

At the regional level, women's roles in negotiation and mediation efforts across the region have been slow. However, countries like Liberia and Mali recorded remarkable progress in their peace negotiation processes. In Liberia, the Women Mass Action for Peace was instrumental to ending the civil war that plagued the country in the 90s.

Through peaceful demonstrations, consistent advocacy and lobbying, these women succeeded in influencing the outcomes of the peace negotiation process, bringing the warring factions to the peace table. Though not officially invited to the negotiations in Ghana, the women were able to gain access to the meeting arena, threatening to disrobe if the negotiators failed to reach a peace deal. This action culminated in the signing of the Accra Comprehensive Peace Agreement on August 18, 2003, officially ending the Liberian second civil war.

In Niger, the 2023 transitional government led by Prime Minister Ali Mahaman Lamine Zeine, started with only 4 women out of 21 ministers (19%)[34], increasing slightly to 5 women out of 21 ministers (23.8%)[35] in the current government. While current figures still fall short of the gender quotas outlined in national legislations (see figure 2), they reveal efforts towards inclusive processes, thanks to consistent advocacy by civil society organisations (CSOs).

Also, in Mali, women's persistent advocacy efforts contributed to the peace process, after the 2012 crisis, which eventually led to the Algiers peace negotiation. Women were able to shape priorities of the peace agreement and post conflict reconstructions. Some of

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[34] *ONEP Niger (2023). Communiqué du Sécrétariat Général du Gouvernement: Formation d'un Gouvernement de 21 membres don't 4 femmes.* *https://www.lesahel.org/communique-du-secretariat-general-du-gouvernement-formation-dun-gouvernement-de-21-membres-dont-quatre-femmes/*
[35] *Portail Officiel du Gouvernement (2015). Les membres du Gouvernement https://www.gouv.ne/index.php/institutions/gouvernement*

Commemoration of the Accra Comprehensive Peace Agreement by the Liberian Women Mass Action for Peace, 21 years later.

their demands included 50% female representation in the Truth, Justice and Reconciliation Commission, the National Commission on Demobilisation, Disarmament and Reintegration, and all related technical and advisory bodies.[36] They also demanded that 10% of profits generated from the exploitation of natural resources, particularly in the mining sector, be allocated to initiatives supporting women's economic empowerment.[37] These sustained advocacy efforts led to the enactment of a 30% gender quota law by President Ibrahim Boubacar Keïta in 2014,[38] paving the way for increased representation and participation of women in the implementation of the Peace Agreement Monitoring Committee.[39] In 2015, when the Algiers Peace Agreement was signed, there were no women in the Peace Agreement Monitoring Committee despite the adoption of the gender law, but in 2020, as a result of consistent advocacy, 9 women integrated the committee (see Figure 3). By 2023, the number increased to 12 women out of 30 members, achieving 40% representation, beyond the legislative quota of 30%. (see Figure 3).

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[36] *UN Women (2025). Women in Mali demand equal role in Peace Accords.* https://www.unwomen.org/en/news/stories/2015/10/women-in-mali-demand-equal-role-in-peace-accords
[37] *Ibid*
[38] *Ibid*
[39] *Agreement For Peace And Reconciliation In Mali Resulting From The Algiers Process.* https://www.un.org/en/pdfs/EN-ML_150620_Accord-pour-la-paix-et-la-reconciliation-au-Mali_Issu-du-Processus-d'Alger.pdf

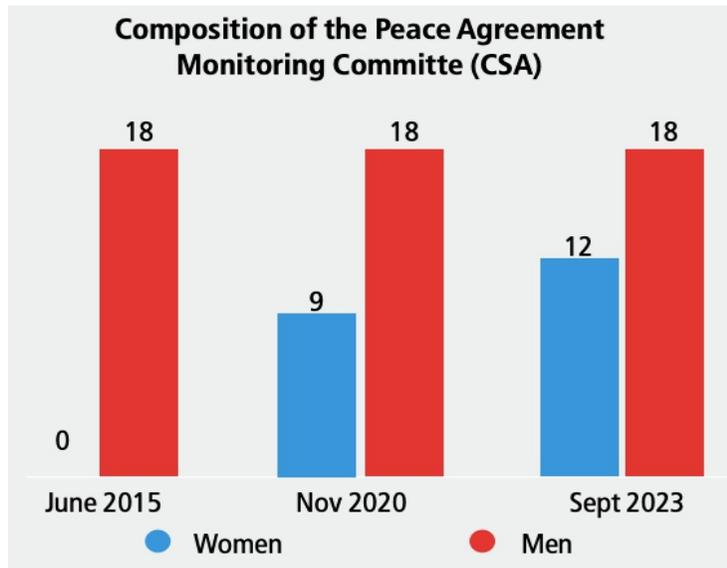**Composition of the Peace Agreement Monitoring Committe (CSA)**

Figure 3: Female Representation in the Algiers Peace Agreement Monitoring Committee. Source: Friedrich Ebert Stiftung, 2024.

Across communities, women have been instrumental in mediating conflicts, often relying on their unique social positions as custodians of tradition. Their indigenous mediation practices have proven effective in easing tensions. In Burkina Faso, for example, women griots tap into ancestral wisdom and established social systems to settle disputes, encourage peaceful coexistence, and maintain social

harmony within families and communities.

As respected historians and storytellers, these women engage in conflict mediation by recounting village traditions, often using humour rooted in kinship ties and ancestral history to foster reflection, and encourage mutual understanding between conflicting parties.[40] In other contexts, like in Ghana, the role of Queen Mothers in conflict mediation has been phenomenal, serving as critical agents of peace and reconciliation.[41] They are involved in settlement of a wide spectrum of disputes, from marital conflicts to family disagreements, through culturally grounded approaches. Madam Euphemia Akos Dzathor, Queen Mother of Alavanyo Deme Community in

Testimonial 1
"Traditional wisdom, practical experience panacea for sustainable peace"

Madam Euphemia Akos Dzathor

Madam Euphemia is a development practitioner in the area of Women, Peace and Security, and community development. She has several years of experience managing women's empowerment programmes at community, national and continental levels. She is Queen Mother and traditional leader of Alavanyo-Deme in the Volta Region of Ghana.

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[40] *Fatimata Ouedraogo (2023). Supporting the role of women in peacebuilding in Burkina Faso. https://pscc.fes.de/fileadmin/user_upload/images/publications/2023/FES-PSCC-Policy-Paper-Supporting_the_role_of_women_in_peacebuilding_in_Burkina_Faso.pdf*
[41] *Lydia Mawuenya Amedzrator (2014). Breaking the Inertia: Women's Role In Mediation and Peace Processes in West Africa. https://www.kaiptc.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/03/New%20folder/Amedzeator.-L.M2014-BREAKING-THE-INERTIA-WOMENS-ROLE-IN-MEDIATION-AND-PEACE-PROCESSES-IN-WEST-AFRICA.pdf*
[42] *Ibid*

community. I saw it as an opportunity to leverage on my position and authority to deal with patriarchy and maintain peace and security in my community. I devised a three-pronged approach to localise the implementation of UNSCR 1325. The first approach is to ensure the participation of women in conflict management processes within the community. I set up a team of elders and tasked them to mediate in the day-to-day conflicts that occur among women in the community. Traditional wisdom and practical experience helped them achieve this, with inputs from modern conflict resolution processes from me. So far, they have managed to restore harmony among women in the community..."

Excerpts of Madam EUPHEMIA DZATHOR's story culled from " She Stands for Peace", published by the African Union, in 2022

''In February 2007, I became Queen Mother of my community (Alavanyo Deme), with traditional authority over a population of about 1,500 people of which, about 51% are female. The community has two levels of leadership, namely the Chief and the Queen Mother. My role is to provide wise counsel to the Chief and his elders, usually on matters affecting women and girls, keeping an eye on the social conditions within the community, and to serve as a role model for the women and girls in the

2.2 Protection Pillar

What the Protection Pillar Says:
This pillar calls for the protection of women and girls from sexual and gender-based violence, including in armed conflicts, emergency and humanitarian situations.

Under this pillar, the region has strengthened legal and policy frameworks, improved access to survivor-centred services, and created specialised mechanisms such as One Stop Centres and Sexual Offences Courts to enhance accountability and justice for survivors.[43] These efforts are further strengthened by the criminalisation of GBV, increased accountability measures and stronger penalties for perpetrators. These provisions represent a substantial advancement in the regional efforts to address GBV and promote justice for survivors. See Annex 1 for details of countries protection laws and frameworks.

2.2.1 Enhanced Legal Framework Against GBV

In 2019, the government of Sierra Leone declared rape a national emergency and amended the Sexual Offences Act to impose harsher penalties for sexual violence, ranging from a minimum sentence of 15 years for a rape conviction to life imprisonment in some cases.[44] Beyond legal reforms, Sierra Leone has embedded GBV prevention and response into national development priorities. Both the 2019–2023 and 2024–2030 Medium-Term National Development Plans recognise GBV as a key concern and a critical enabler of gender inequality. The country has also adopted a National Male Involvement Strategy to actively engage men and boys as allies in preventing GBV and promoting gender equity.[45] In 2023, Sierra Leone became the first country outside a humanitarian context to adopt the GBV Information Management System Plus (GBVIMS+), with support from UNICEF and UNFPA. The GBVIMS+ enhances the collection, analysis, and use of GBV data, to improve case management, service delivery for survivors and inform policy development.[46]

Other countries, such as Cape Verde passed in 2011, Law No. 84/VII/2011 which criminalises various forms of GBV, including domestic violence and sexual assault;[47] In Côte d'Ivoire, perpetrators of Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) face up to five years imprisonment and a fine of 360,000 to 2,000,000 CFA francs. The penalty is doubled if the perpetrator belongs to the medical or paramedical profession. Mali's revised Penal Code, which came into effect in 2024, criminalised psychological and sexual harassment, expanded the legal definition of rape, and officially codified femicide as a criminal offense.

2.2.2. Comprehensive Mechanisms for Protection Against GBV

Domestic violence, rape, sexual assault and other forms of GBV, are often shrouded in secrecy due to stigma and victim

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[43] *Lawyers Without Borders (2025). Mali strengthens its legislation against gender-based violence: a major victory for civil society. https://asfcanada.ca/en/medias/mali-strengthens-its-legislation-against-gender-based-violence-a-major-victory-for-civil-society/*
[44] *International Monetary Fund. African Dept.(2024). Combatting Gender-Based Violence and Fostering Development. https://www.elibrary.imf.org/view/journals/002/2024/322/article-A007-en.xml#:~:text=4.,and%20in%20promoting%20gender%20equality.*
[45] *Ibid*
[46] *Ibid*
[47] *Law Gratis (2025). Woman laws at Cape Verde. https://lawgratis.com/blog-detail/woman-laws-at-cape-verde*

blaming. Also, the fragmented and costly nature of GBV response services remain a constant challenge to the effective protection of women and girls. In order to address this, countries like Côte d'Ivoire, Sierra Leone, Ghana, The Gambia, Togo, Burkina Faso, Mali, and Niger adopted the One-Stop Centre model, a holistic and innovative approach to GBV service delivery.

One-Stop centres offer integrated, multi-sectoral support to survivors, either in a single location or through coordinated networks of providers within the same locality with the goal to enhance survivor safety and well-being, while strengthening perpetrators' accountability.[48] The Centres typically provide a wide-range of free and essential services, including a comprehensive psychological counseling; Legal assistance to support prosecution and protect victims; and temporary shelter where needed. As protective and preventive mechanisms, the centres support reintegration of survivors into the society, train service providers and conduct public awareness campaigns on GBV. In Ghana, the centre is coordinated by the Domestic Violence and Victims Support Unit (DOVVSU) of the Ghana Police Service while in Sierra Leone, it is led by the Ministry of Gender and Children's Affairs in collaboration with civil society and international partners.

Sierra Leone has also intensified efforts to provide a specialised and efficient, survivor-centred approach to GBV[49] with the establishment of the Sexual Offences Model Court in 2020, further reinforcing the justice system's capacity to respond to GBV. Between 2019 and 2020, a total of 152 convictions for rape and sexual violence were recorded following the declaration of a state of emergency on the issue. Sixty-four (64) of the 152 convictions occurred after the establishment of the Sexual Offences Model Court.[50]

2.3 Prevention Pillar

What the Prevention Pillar Says:
This pillar calls for improving intervention strategies in the prevention of violence against women, including by prosecuting those responsible for violence of international law: strengthening women's rights under national law and supporting local women's peace initiatives and conflict prevention.

In line with provisions of this pillar, a number of interventions were conducted in the region, as part of the measures to prevent violence against women and girls.

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[48] *Spotlight Initiative (2025). Develop a One Stop Centre.* https://www.spotlightinitiative.org/develop-one-stop-centre
[49] *International Monetary Fund. African Dept.(2024). Combatting Gender-Based Violence and Fostering Development.* https://www.elibrary.imf.org/view/journals/002/2024/322/article-A007-en.xml#:~:text=4.,and%20in%20promoting%20gender%20equality.
[50] *H.E. Dr. Alie Kabba, Permanent Mission of the Republic of Sierra Leone to the United Nations (2020). Agenda Item 86 "Rule of Law" at the National and International Levels Delivered in the Sixth Committee.* (https://www.un.org/en/ga/sixth/75/pdfs/statements/rule_of_law/08mtg_sierraleone.pdf

2.3.1. Mainstreaming Gender into the ECOWAS Early Warning System:

The ECOWAS Early Warning System (ECOWARN), supported by WANEP under a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU), serves as a critical mechanism for conflict prevention across the West African region. Over time, the system was revised to incorporate gender-sensitive indicators, including GBV. To operationalise this integration, a series of capacity-building training sessions were conducted for relevant stakeholders. At the national level for instance, the National Centres for Coordination of Early Warning and Response Mechanism (NCCRM) were capacitated with necessary skills to effectively utilise the WPS indicators for data collection and analysis. This enhanced the production of gender sensitive analytical documents and informed responses against GBV. Currently, 11 National Centres are operational in the region, specifically in Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Liberia, Mali, Niger, Nigeria, Sierra Leone, and The Gambia.[51]
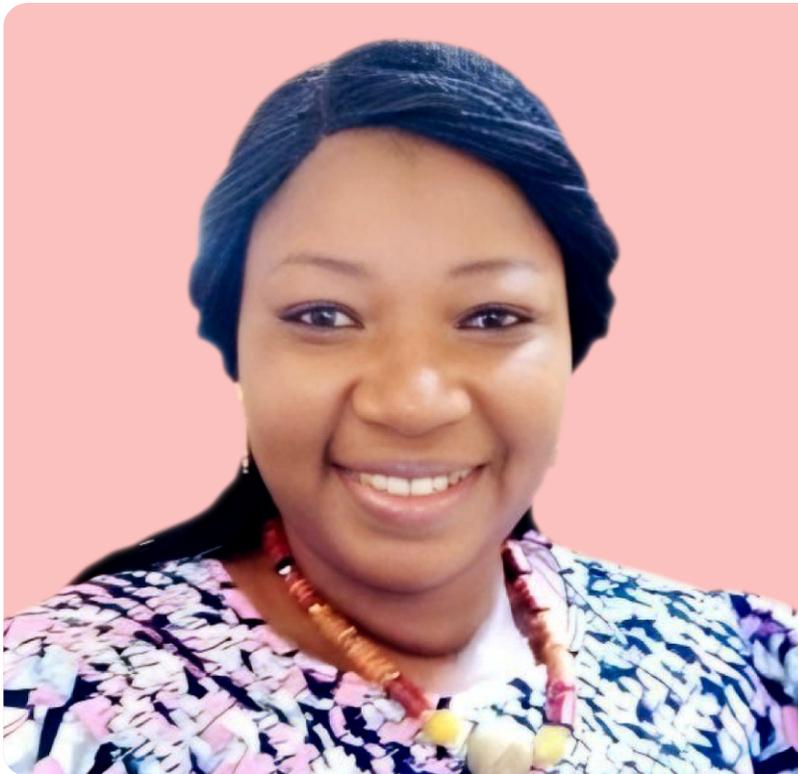
Testimonial 2
Madam Jamila Jakalia

"My name is Jamila Jakalia. I worked as a Human Security Analyst for Governance and Human Rights in NCCRM-Ghana Office. My work entailed research, data collection and analysis as well as production of early warning reports with actionable recommendations for policy and decision makers. When I assumed duty as an Analyst in September 2021, it was challenging especially with respect to integrating and

[51] ECOWAS (2024). ECOWAS Early Warning Directorate Exchange and Assessment Mission to Liberia National Early Warning Centre. https://reliefweb.int/report/liberia/ecowas-early-warning-directorate-exchange-and-assessment-mission-liberia-national-early-warning-center

producing gender sensitive early warning reports. However, in June 2022, I was lucky to benefit from a one-week in-depth capacity building programme organised by ECOWAS with support from WANEP in Abidjan, Cote D'Ivoire. The training focused on strengthening the thematic analysis of the National Early Warning Centres on Gender, Governance and Human Rights. Facilitators during the training took participants through several topics including basic concepts in gender, data analysis tools for gender mainstreaming as well as overview of gender instruments, implementation and coping mechanisms.

As a result of this capacity building, I became better equipped and produced gender-sensitive reports, briefs and risk assessments that linked governance, human rights and human security in a manner that decision makers could act on. I also shared knowledge with a colleague who is a thematic analyst to ensure that we approached data collection, analysis and reporting that reflected the different insecurities faced by women, men and vulnerable groups across all the thematic areas of human security. I thank ECOWAS and WANEP for the invaluable knowledge gained during the training and wish them well in their bid to ensure human security for ALL.''

2.3.2. Enhanced Women's Legal Rights and Access to Land:

In many West African countries, women face systemic exclusion from land ownership due to socio-cultural norms, patriarchal practices, and discriminatory legal frameworks, which hinders their economic empowerment, creates dependency and limits their options when experiencing violence. Evidence shows that securing women's land rights, significantly enhances their economic independence, reinforces their protection from

violence, including GBV, and empowers them to leave or avoid abusive situations.[52] Recognising this fact, several countries in the region reformed their legal systems to strengthen women's rights, ownership and control over lands.

Liberia adopted the Land Rights Act (LRA) in 2018, which guarantees equal rights for women in land ownership, use, and management.[53] Hitherto, land management in rural Liberia was largely dictated by customary law, often marginalising women. The LRA, recognition of the

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[52] FAO (2023). Eliminating gender-based violence and protecting rural communities through food security and agricultural interventions. https://openknowledge.fao.org/server/api/core/bitstreams/9f67852f-d10d-444b-a62c-c1f4ad6744ba/content

[53] Dr. Monica Mhoja(2025). Root-to-stem solutions equip widows in rural Liberia with the tools to build a stable future. https://www.landesa.org/equal-rights-equal-power/#:~:text=Equal%20rights%20to%20land,equal%20rights%20to%20their%20land

customary land rights of women and other marginalised groups resulted to approximately 2.3 million rural Liberians, finally gaining legal access to their customary land.[54] The LRA is widely regarded as one of the most progressive land rights reforms on the African continent,[55] ensuring that Liberian women can now inherit landed properties of their deceased spouses, thus preventing in-laws from confiscating the land.[56]

Benin and Sierra Leone also set up land reform mechanisms to enhance women's access to, and control over land. The 2013 Land Code enacted in Benin, provides a comprehensive legal basis for gender equality in land access, ownership, use, and inheritance, for women and men.[57] Similarly, the Sierra Leone 2015 National Land Policy and the 2022 National Land Commission Act mandatory provision, stating that women constitute at least 30% of membership led to inclusive and equitable land management and promoted women's participation in land governance and decision-making processes.[58]

2.3.3 Active Involvement of Women in Conflict Prevention at National and Community Levels

Women have consistently played a critical role in conflict prevention and informal peacebuilding efforts across West Africa, though often underrecognised. At both national and community levels, their contributions have taken diverse and impactful forms, particularly in raising awareness on peace, utilising accessible communication channels, such as radio programmes broadcast in local languages, to reach broader audiences. Women are also actively engaged in peace committees at the community level, mediating tensions, engaging with state actors and armed groups.

Global celebrations such as International Women's Day (IWD), International Day of Peace and the 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence, equally provided opportunities to amplify women's voices in decision making and peace processes by demanding accountability and calling for the creation of enabling legal and policy frameworks that uphold their rights and security.

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[54] *Ibid*
[55] *Ibid*
[56] *Ibid*
[57] *Assemblée Nationale, Republique du Benin (2013). Loi n° 2013-01 portant code foncier et domanial en République du Bénin.* https://www.droit-afrique.com/upload/doc/benin/Benin-Code-foncier-domanial-2013.pdf
[58] *FAO (2022). National Land Commission Act (No. 19 of 2022).* https://genderlex.fao.org/en/country/profiles/SLE/document/LEX-FAOC212618

2.4 Relief and Recovery Pillar

What the Relief and Recovery Pillar Entails:
This pillar calls for the inclusion of a gender perspective in peace negotiations and post-conflict processes. It emphasises addressing the specific needs of women and girls during repatriation, resettlement, rehabilitation, and reconstruction, including socio

Efforts to support women and girls affected by conflict and disasters in West Africa have increasingly focused on strengthening legal and institutional frameworks for relief, recovery, and long-term resilience. These approaches aim to ensure that the specific needs and experiences of women and girls are addressed in post-conflict and disaster settings and ensure that recovery processes are inclusive and equitable.

2.4.1. Strengthening Legal and Institutional Frameworks for Gender-sensitive Disaster Management

- **African Union and ECOWAS Commitments:** In 2006, the African Union (AU) adopted the Post-Conflict Reconstruction and Development (PCRD) Framework

to guide member states in rebuilding societies emerging from conflict.[59] Recognising the unique challenges faced by women and girls, the framework was reviewed in 2024, introducing Pillar 5 specifically dedicated to Women, Peace and Security (WPS).[60] This inclusion represents a critical step toward ensuring gender-sensitive recovery and reconstruction processes.

At the regional level, ECOWAS has supported inclusive Disarmament, Demobilisation and Reintegration (DDR) processes through the implementation of its Conflict Prevention Framework (ECPF) component 10, focusing on WPS and the ECOWAS Peace Fund, (EPF).[61] The ECPF is a comprehensive regional instrument guiding ECOWAS's peace and security architecture. It includes multiple provisions on DDR, highlighting the responsibility of Member States to implement and support DDR processes as part of their conflict prevention and peacebuilding obligations.[62] It promotes early response mechanisms, inclusive peacebuilding, and human security approaches, all essential for effective DDR. The ECPF also plays a crucial role in financing peace and security operations, including post-conflict reconstruction. Under its 2024–2028 Strategic Plan, the ECPF emphasises capacity building for national institutions, supports community

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[59] African Union (2006). Policy on Post-Conflict Reconstruction and Development (PCRD). https://www.peaceau.org/uploads/pcrd-policy-framwowork-eng.pdf
[60] African Union. (2024). Revised Post-Conflict Reconstruction and Development Policy. https://www.peaceau.org/uploads/amended-pcrd-policy-rev-05-february-2024.pdf
[61] ECOWAS (2008). The ECOWAS Conflict Prevention Framework. https://www.law.cornell.edu/sites/www.law.cornell.edu/files/andjusticeforall/ECOWAS-Conflict-Prevention-Framework.pdf
[62] Ibid

reintegration of ex-combatants, including women and girls and funds programmes that address the root causes of conflict.[63] ECOWAS also has a Policy Framework for Security Sector Reform and Governance (SSRG),[64] which complements DDR efforts by strengthening national institutions responsible for delivering inclusive security and justice services. The integration of these frameworks reflects ECOWAS's commitment to sustainable peacebuilding, where recovery is not only about disarming combatants but also about rebuilding institutions, communities, and trust.

These frameworks have guided DDR processes at national level and supported the development of rehabilitation programmes for ex-combatants, including women and girls, although their participation remains limited. In Niger, for example, a total of 369 people benefited from such a programme in 2025, including 307 men, 21 women, and 41 children.[65] They took part in government-led training initiatives and some subsequently joined the national armed forces, while others received assistance to engage in income-generating activities.[66]

- **Truth and Reconciliation Mechanisms:** The Truth and Reconciliation Commissions (TRCs) have played a crucial role in the recovery process of survivors of conflict related

sexual violence (CRSV). In Sierra Leone and Liberia, TRCs provided platforms for survivors to share their experiences, contributed to national healing, and formulated recommendations for institutional reform and victim support, including reparations, psychosocial care, and legal redress for women and girls.[67]

- **Gender-Sensitive Disaster Risk Management:** Relief and recovery efforts also extend to disaster contexts, where women and girls often face disproportionate risks and barriers to recovery. The ECOWAS Disaster Risk Reduction Gender Strategy and Action Plan (2020–2030) provides a guiding framework for integrating gender considerations into disaster risk reduction (DRR) and management.[68] Ghana takes the lead in gender-sensitive disaster risk management with the establishment of the National Disaster Management Organisation (NADMO) in 1996. The organisation is tasked with disaster preparedness, response, and recovery. Although NADMO does not yet have a standalone gender policy, it leverages existing frameworks such as the National Gender Policy and the NAPs to address gender inequalities in disaster response. NADMO utilises sex-disaggregated data for planning and response; promotes women's participation

[63] ECOWAS (2023). ECOWAS Peace Fund 5-Year Strategic Plan (2024-2028). https://peacefund.ecowas.int/files/joint/epf-5-year-strategic-plan.pdf

[64] ECOWAS (2016). ECOWAS Policy Framework for Security Sector Reform and Governance. https://www.africansecuritynetwork.org/assn/wp-content/uploads/2025/03/ECOWAS-Policy-Framework-for-SSRG-English.pdf

[65] Safae Fathi (2025). Niger integrates ex-combatants into the army after training. https://africa-eye.com/fr/2025/10/15/le-niger-integre-des-ex-combattants-dans-larmee-apres-formation/

[66] Ibid.

[67] International Center for Transitional Justice (2009). Transitional Justice and DDR:
The Case of Sierra Leone. https://www.ictj.org/sites/default/files/ICTJ-DDR-Sierra-Leone-CaseStudy-2009-English.pdf

[68] ECOWAS (2020). ECOWAS Disaster Risk Reduction Gender Strategy and Action Plan 2020-2030. https://www.gfdrr.org/sites/default/files/publication/ECOWAS%20GSAP_EN_Final.pdf

in disaster risk governance; and provides tailored relief and rehabilitation services that consider the specific needs of women and girls.[69]

Additionally, Ghana has developed a Climate Change Gender Action Plan (CCGAP) and mainstreamed gender into its Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) under the Paris Agreement. These NDCs include 31 programmes of action (20 mitigation, 11 adaptation) across seven sectors: energy and industry, health, transport, agriculture and forestry, waste, water, and gender.[70] This integrated approach ensures that women are not only protected but empowered as key actors in climate resilience and recovery processes.

2.4.2 Mobile Legal Clinics as Mechanism for Survivors' Recovery Process

In West Africa CSOs are leading the rehabilitation, and restoration of the rights of GBV survivors, particularly through the establishment of mobile and stationary legal clinics. The Association of Women Lawyers of Côte d'Ivoire (AFJCI)[71] and the Women in Law and Development in Africa (WiLDAF),[72] have championed legal clinics for years. Legal clinics are support structures that facilitate access to justice for vulnerable populations living in remote or underserved areas. They are typically composed of lawyers, magistrates, social workers, and legal advisors who deploy their expertise to facilitate access to justice for women and girls. They provide free legal consultations, and guidance, training on human rights and women's rights, and organise community awareness campaigns.

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[69] NADMO, 2nd Quarter Report (2024). https://orcc.gov.gh/download/second-quarter-report-nadmo-2024-2/
[70] Prof. Philip Antwi-Agyei; Dr. Mumuni Abu; Ms. Akua Amoa Okyere-Nyako (2021). Climate Change Gender Action Plan.) https://files.acquia.undp.org/public/migration/gh/UNDP_Gh-Ghana_-Gender_-Action_Plan.pdf
[71] AFJCI. https://afjci.org/
[72] WilDAF-AO. https://wildaf-ao.org/

WANEP's COMMITMENT TO WPS AGENDA: FROM RHETORIC TO ACTION

This section explores WANEP's multi-dimensional inclusive peacebuilding initiatives and specific contributions across the four key pillars of resolution 1325: participation, protection, prevention, and relief and recovery.

3.1. WANEP's Multi-dimensional Inclusive Peacebuilding Initiatives

Over the past 25 years, WANEP has positioned itself as an interface between policy makers and citizens to promote inclusive processes and shape policies that respond to the aspiration of women and girls, in the area of peace, security and governance. Through its Women, Peace and Security (WPS) Programme, originally launched as the Women in Peacebuilding Network (WIPNET), WANEP seeks to enhance the contribution of women and young girls to conflict prevention and peacebuilding efforts and ensure that their peculiar needs, concerns and issues are mainstreamed into all formal and informal peacebuilding processes in West Africa. To achieve this, WANEP, relies on global, continental and regional frameworks, such as the UNSCR 1325 and related resolutions, the African Union Continental Results Framework on WPS and the ECOWAS Conflict Prevention Framework (ECPF), as guide and reference. Its strategic partnership with ECOWAS and working relationship with the Gender Ministries over the years, have paved way for advancing women's participation, protection, and leadership in peace and security across the region.

3.1.1. Providing Effective Guidelines for Women's Inclusive Participation in Decision Making and Peace Processes

Implementation of Resolution 1325 witnessed a slow start due to the lack of a clear direction and guideline as well as limited capacity to develop a national action plan. This gap was addressed when in 2002, WANEP teamed up with ECOWAS and the Kofi Annan International Peacekeeping Training Centre (KAIPTC), to develop a guideline that enhanced capacity of West African countries in formulating and implementing UNSCR 1325 NAPs. The guideline, published in the three

main languages spoken in the ECOWAS region, viz; English, French and Portuguese, helped expand scope and increase knowledge on NAPs development process. As a result of these efforts, West Africa became the first region to achieve a significant number of NAPs during the early stages of UNSCR 1325 adoption.

At regional level, WANEP supported the development of the ECOWAS Conflict Prevention Framework adopted in 2008 with component 10 focusing on Women, peace and security as well as the ECOWAS Regional Action Plan for the implementation of UNSCR 1325 and related resolutions. These frameworks provided grounds for the operationalisation of the WPS agenda at country level and supported advocacy efforts for the development of UNSCR 1325 NAPs. Beyond supporting the development of NAPs in 14 West African countries, WANEP has played a crucial role in their implementation.

WANEP has maintained a strong partnership and has been actively involved in WPS technical and steering committees, led state-level consultations and provided capacity-building for peacebuilding actors across the region. WANEP leveraged on this strategic position to shape policies at national levels and further advocate for women's inclusive participation in decision making and peace processes.

In 2015, WANEP partnered with ECOWAS to hold a regional conference on 15 years of UNSCR 1325 implementation. Critical stakeholders drawn from government agencies, development partners, and CSOs from across the region came together to reflect on progress, challenges and potentials in the 15 years of UNSCR 1325 implementation. Recommendations from the forum informed

DEVELOPMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION of National Action Plans on UNSCR 1325 and Related Resolutions: *A Guideline*

WANEP

WEST AFRICA NETWORK FOR PEACEBUILDING
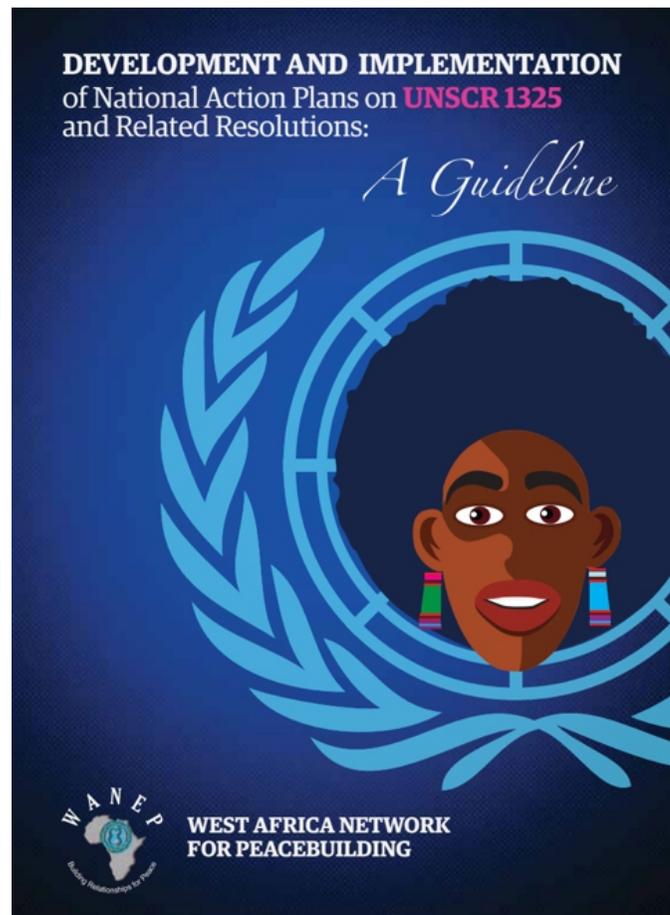
strategic actions on WPS and helped improved delivery on WPS afterwards. A key recommendation of the forum emphasised the need for investment in national early warning and early response mechanisms, ensuring the critical role of women and CSOs in the various early warning pillars.[73] This led to the production of a Manual and Training Modules on the integration of Gender in the ECOWAS Early Warning System, validated in 2018,[74] which greatly enhanced gender disaggregation in the early warning system for informed analysis and response.

3.1.2. Amplifying Women's Voices through Sustainable Platforms

WANEP successfully established and strengthened intergenerational platforms, both physical and virtual. These platforms provided avenue to amplify the voices of women and young women in peace and security processes and led to policy influence and stakeholder commitments to advance the WPS agenda across the region. Platforms such as the WANEP Annual Lecture Series and the WPS Annual Forum, attracts over 100 participants each year,

(Left) Edith Kouassi, a Young Environmentalist and Peace Activist in Côte d'Ivoire, Director of ECOPLAST/INNOV, taking part in a Panel Discussion during the WANEP WPS Lecture Series on the theme Gender, Security and Climate Change: Building Strategic Action for Sustainable Peace, Accra, Ghana, 2022

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[73] *WANEP (2015). 15 Years Of Implementing 1325 In West Africa: Looking Back and Looking Forward. https://wanep.org/wanep/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/1325-Experience-Sharing-Report.pdf*
[74] *Tunji Oyeyemi (2018). Experts Begin ECOWAS Early Warning Gender Integration Manual Validation. https://fmino.gov.ng/experts-begin-ecowas-early-warning-gender-integration-manual-validation/*

including women, young women, policymakers, and civil society actors. These gatherings provided trusted spaces for constructive intergenerational dialogue, while enhancing accountability from duty bearers and strengthening evidence-based advocacy. The forum tackled germane topics covering gender-sensitive responses to conflict, inclusivity, strategies for achieving sustainable peace as well as meaningful involvement of women in democratic transitions among others. Recommendations from these platforms have resulted to increased policy responsiveness and informed strategic planning for sustainable development and lasting peace.

WANEP also launched the Gender Talk Series, a quarterly digital consultation forum in 2019 for peacebuilding actors and gender activists to deliberate on peace and security issues and develop strategies that would place women at the centre of conflict prevention, resolution and reconstruction. Currently, the platform has hosted over 2,000 participants, comprising state and non-state actors, women and young

women, who were given opportunity to share experiences, perspectives and insights on WPS implementation in the region. The discussions have generated actionable recommendations, which are harvested in the form of an e-publication, the Gender Connect and widely disseminated to key partners and relevant stakeholders. These efforts led to shifts in programming and advocacy priorities. For example, following discussions on the need to strengthen collaboration with men, WANEP Nigeria and partners launched the male allyship initiatives and built the capacity of male champions to promote gender-responsive peacebuilding. In Edo State, this resulted in the establishment of a male champions platform headed by the Commissioner of Police.[75]

Participants of a Capacity Building Workshop for WPS Male Champions, organised by WANEP Nigeria and its partners

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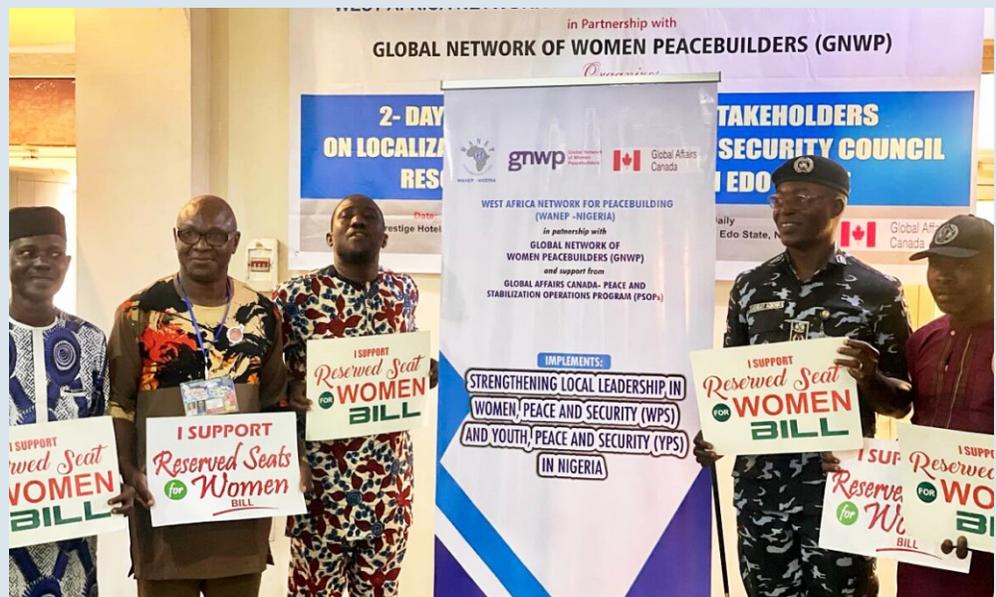
[75] *WANEP Nigeria (2025). Day 2 activities spotlighted the Male Champions Group led by the Commissioner of Police, Edo State, who showcased their commitment to advancing gender-responsive peacebuilding and preventing gender-based violence.* https://wanepnigeria.org/day-2-activities-spotlighted-the-male-champions-group-led-by-the-commissioner-of-police-edo-state-who-showcased-their-commitment-to-advancing-gender-responsive-peacebuilding-and-preventing-gender-ba/

WANEP Nigeria also trained media professionals, male and female to spotlight women's peacebuilding contributions. The trained journalists set up Media4Peace network, as a platform for projecting the gains of the WPS agenda, progress and challenges and the stories of women. In Togo, Benin, Guinea and Nigeria, WANEP's National Networks acted on the recommendations from the Series on Intergenerational Solidarity to develop tailored leadership and mentorship programmes, aimed at empowering young women for leadership roles in peacebuilding within their communities.

3.1.3. Influencing Global Policies on WPS

In recognition of its role as the leading regional peacebuilding organisation in West Africa, the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) invited WANEP to brief on regional security dynamics, offer policy guidance and proffer workable solutions. WANEP also debriefed the Council on regional progress in the implementation of the WPS agenda. These global invitations testify to WANEP's growing influence in shaping global discourse on sustainable peace and security in the region.

WANEP Executive Director, Mrs. Levinia Addae-Mensah,
debriefs the Security Council on regional security
and WPS Milestones in the region

Representing WANEP during the high-level sessions, the Executive Director, Mrs. Levinia Addae-Mensah highlighted progress and achievements in advancing the WPS agenda across West Africa; Persistent gaps and challenges hindering implementation and made strategic recommendations for advancing the WPS agenda. In her submission, the Executive Director recommended repositioning women's participation as essential to peace and security rather than as an add-on or optional element. She called for bridging the gap between policy and practice through predictable and sustained financing for WPS initiatives and shifting from protection-focused approaches to prosperity-based prevention, by promoting women's economic empowerment as a peacebuilding pillar. Mrs. Addae-Mensah emphasised prioritising land rights, access to finance, vocational training, and entrepreneurship and ensuring these priorities are integrated into transitional, post-conflict recovery, and reintegration programmes.

3.1.4. Enhancing WPS Capacity and Expertise across West Africa

From inception, capacity building has been central to the WANEP Women, Peace and Security (WPS) strategy in recognition of significant capacity gaps in gender-responsive peacebuilding. WANEP has over the years, focused on raising trained women experts, mediators, researchers, trainers, and advocates to lead transformative

peace and security efforts across the region. In 2002, WANEP established the West Africa Peacebuilding Institute (WAPI) in partnership with the Kofi Annan International Peacekeeping Training Centre (KAIPTC). From 2002 to 2017, WAPI trained 576 peacebuilding practitioners, with women making up approximately 30% of the participants.[76] WAPI became a pioneering regional platform offering specialised training in gender and peacebuilding, thus filling a critical gap in early civil society-led peacebuilding efforts across West Africa.[77]

Building on WAPI's success at the regional level, WANEP national networks designed and implemented context-specific capacity building programmes aimed at increasing the number of women peacebuilders across West Africa. The training programmes have addressed a wide range of thematic areas geared at equipping women with practical tools and frameworks to position them for meaningful leadership roles. WAPI curriculum is regularly revised, reviewed and updated to reflect current peace and conflict dynamics in the areas of Gender, Peacebuilding continuum, Violent Extremism, Conflict Prevention, Advocacy and Communication. Early Warning concepts, Leadership and governance, and Normative Frameworks also form part of the curriculum. Many beneficiaries of WAPI have transitioned into leadership roles in peace and security across West Africa, taking up positions within ECOWAS, the AU, UN Missions, Gender Ministries, state institutions, and civil society organisations. These women are now shaping peacebuilding

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[76] *Strides and Strains of Civil Society Organisations in West Africa: The WANEP Story (2017).* *https://wanep.org/wanep/wp-content/uploads/2023/05/Eng_OUR_STORY_Wanep.pdf*
[77] *Ibid*

strategies, influencing WPS policy outcomes, strengthening institutional accountability across the region and enhancing women's participation in decision making and peace processes across the region.

3.1.5. Strengthening Local Ownership of WPS Agenda

WANEP was instrumental in localising the WPS agenda by working closely with local institutions to adapt National Action Plans (NAPs) to community-specific contexts. These efforts have ensured that the commitments of UNSCR 1325 are not just national policies but are translated into concrete, community-level impact, particularly in the lives of women and girls affected by conflict, insecurity, and inequality. In this direction, WANEP Nigeria, in collaboration with the Global Network of Women Peacebuilders (GNWP), developed guidelines to localise WPS implementation;[78] built capacity of local authorities and formulated Local Action Plans (LAPs) in Bauchi, Gombe, and Lagos States. Similar efforts are ongoing

to support the LAP development in four additional areas: Balanga, Kwami, Katagum, and Toro. With these local action plans, local actors now have tailored tools and frameworks to respond to the unique peace and security concerns and humanitarian needs of women and girls within their communities.

Other efforts included the launch of "Community Women Voices for Peace" radio programmes, broadcasted in local languages across five countries (Nigeria, Burkina Faso, Mali, Niger and Côte d'Ivoire). This increased community women's awareness of the WPS agenda, expanded its scope, and enhanced local ownership in the target areas. In Burkina Faso, WANEP translated key elements of UNSCR 1325 into visual formats, making the information more accessible to women in communities with low literacy levels. Women previously excluded from formal policy dialogues are now more informed and actively engaging in WPS processes.

1325 visuals conceptualised by WANEP Burkina Faso

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[78] *WANEP Nigeria. Guideline for Localisation on Nigeria's NAP on UNSCR 1325. https://wanepnigeria.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/01/guidelines-for-the-localization.pdf*

Advocacy Visit of WANEP Burkina for women's inclusion in decision making at community level

(Left) WANEP Regional Coordinator WPS, Josiane Sombo, speaking during the ECOWAS WPS Steering Committee in Togo, Lome, 2023

3.1.6. Advancing Accountability through Effective Monitoring and Reporting Mechanisms

WANEP has made significant contributions to strengthening accountability frameworks for the WPS agenda across West Africa by supporting effective monitoring, reporting, and data-driven decision-making at both national and regional levels. As Co-Chair of the ECOWAS WPS Steering Committee, WANEP plays a strategic role in providing technical support to member states for reporting on the WPS agenda, using the African Union's Continental Results Framework (CRF), the primary continental mechanism to track WPS implementation under 41 qualitative and quantitative indicators. To streamline the process and strengthen users' understanding of the reporting tools, WANEP partnered with ECOWAS to adapt and simplify the CRF. This ensured that the framework reflects the realities of West Africa and can be effectively applied at both national and community levels. WANEP also supported capacity building of ECOWAS member states to generate timely, accurate WPS reports that inform policy and guide targeted interventions. These efforts are increasingly improving understanding and coherence in WPS monitoring and reporting across the ECOWAS region.

WANEP equally conceptualised and piloted the Women Influencers Portal (WIP), an innovative digital tool designed to enhance the visibility of women and track their contribution to the WPS agenda under the four pillars of UNSCR 1325. The initial phase of WIP focused on three Sahelian countries, Burkina Faso, Mali, Niger, and Côte d'Ivoire and is set to expand to other countries. The novelty of WIP is that it aligns with the CRF indicators, marking the first time that a portal is based on the CRF indicators. Another key feature of WIP is the integration of an organisational assessment tool derived from the WANEP Organisational Development Index (WODI), that supports organisational growth and strength of women's groups as well as their level of influence in achieving the WPS agenda. About 200 women across the four target countries have so far been registered in WIP. Data from WIP are utilised to generate WPS reports and provide policy recommendations to advance the agenda across the region.

3.1.7. Advancing Gender-Sensitive Conflict Analysis

As part of its commitment to integrating a gender lens into peacebuilding and conflict prevention, WANEP developed two pioneering tools, the SCALE and BRICK, designed to ensure that conflict analysis meaningfully reflects the differentiated experiences and vulnerabilities of women, men, boys, and girls.

SCALE is a tool that disaggregates the impact of conflicts by sex, recognising that even when individuals play similar roles in a conflict setting, their vulnerabilities, coping mechanisms, and levels of exposure differ significantly. It enables a nuanced analysis of how conflict affects women and men differently, thereby strengthening the design of targeted and inclusive response strategies that address specific needs of women, men, boys and girls. BRICK is inspired by the interconnectedness of bricks in a structure. This tool helps analysts examine four interrelated dimensions of conflict impact, guiding users to consciously apply both gender and age lenses. It moves beyond binary male/female analysis to consider broader structural and identity-based impacts, including boys, and girls and other intergenerational dynamics.
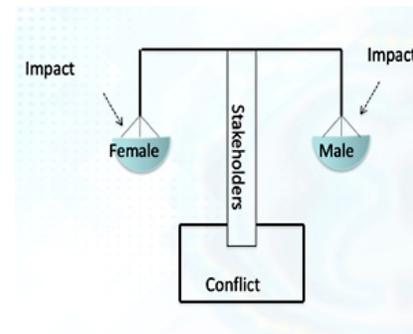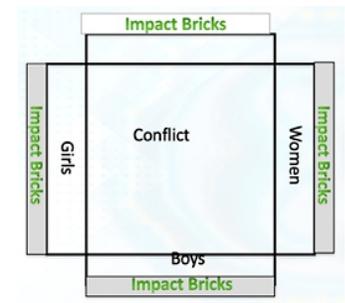
The SCALE   *The BRICK*

3.2. WANEP's Contribution to UNSCR 1325 Pillar by Pillar

This section highlights WANEP' contribution to the WPS agenda, across the four UNSCR 1325 pillars of participation, protection, prevention, and relief and recovery.

3.2.1.   The Participation Pillar

WANEP, through its National Networks, has played a strategic and catalytic role in advancing gender equality in political representation by advocating for the adoption and implementation of quota and parity laws across West Africa. These efforts have translated into policy change, strengthened accountability mechanisms, and increased women's participation in governance.

3.2.1.1. Driving Advocacy for the Adoption and Implementation of Quota and Parity Laws

WANEP Côte d'Ivoire, as a member of the national Universal Periodic Review (UPR) follow-up committee, collaborated with the committee members and other civil society organisations to carry out sustained advocacy culminating to the adoption of the quota law in 2019, which mandates increased female representation in political institutions.[79]

WANEP Côte d'Ivoire is also a member of other national monitoring bodies, including the National Observatory for Equity and Gender (ONEG), and the Women Parliamentarians' Caucus. These committees ensured the enforcement of the gender law, mandating a minimum of 30% female candidacy in the political parties. Political parties who fail to comply were disqualified. As a result of this provision, the September 2023 local elections recorded the registration of 11,892 women among 35,302 total candidates, accounting for 33.67% overall, including 33.97% in municipal elections and 32.07% in regional elections.[80] This was no mean feat as the numbers far exceeded the legal quota allowed. Furthermore, Women's increased representation also led to electoral success, with female candidates winning 1,670 out of 5,225 regional council seats (31.96%) and 10,235 out of 30,084 municipal council seats (34.02%), surpassing the legislated quota of 30%.[81] This is a significant increase reflecting the importance of quota/parity laws in promoting women's leadership and political participation and the need for the establishment of monitoring mechanisms to ensure their enforcement and effectiveness.

Similarly in 2020, WANEP Togo, in partnership with other civil society organisations led advocacy campaigns to the Ministers of Gender, Youth and Human Rights, the President of Parliament, as well as Political Parties and other key

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[79] UPR Info (2025). La participation politique des femmes en Côte d'Ivoire https://upr-info.org/fr/news/la-participation-politique-des-femmes-en-cote-divoire
[80] Tristan Sahi (2023). Elections locales 2023, 11 892 femmes candidates enregistrées sur 35 302.https://www.7info.ci/elections-locales-2023-11-892-femmes-candidates-enregistrees-sur-35-302/
[81] Commission Electorale Indépendante (2023). Statistiques des Candidat-e-s et des Elu-e-s par Sexe.https://cei.ci/wp-content/uploads/2024/01/STAT_CAND_ELU_E_S_2023_V4.pdf

decision-makers calling for 35% of cabinet positions to be allocated to women, 15% of positions to be allocated to youth. As a result of this advocacy, the composition of the 2020 government reflected significant progress, with 33% of ministerial positions being held by women, up from 22% in the previous government.[82]

3.2.1.2. Supporting Inclusive Security Sector Reforms

WANEP's strategic interventions in the security sector reform across West Africa have yielded results in enhancing women's leadership and inclusive participation. In Burkina Faso, Mali, and Niger, WANEP created a pool of women experts in security sector reforms. These women benefited from an extensive training and gained practical experience in security sector reforms, governance, leadership, gender mainstreaming, advocacy, and community mobilisation. Aside enhancing their confidence and strengthening their leadership in security governance, the pool also institutionalised women's roles as trusted partners in the peace and security process and contributed to more inclusive and community-responsive security reforms.

In Mali, the pool of experts was integrated into the National Dialogue and Action Platform, enabling their direct contribution to shaping national security policies. The women are being actively consulted by security actors at the local

level and have also taken on the role of community liaisons, ensuring effective relay of early warning signals and security concerns to the relevant authorities, thereby improving responsiveness and community safety.

In Guinea, WANEP is a member of the National Steering Committee for Security Sector Reform and has successfully advocated for greater inclusion of women within the sector. As a result of this sustained advocacy, more women in Guinea's defense and security forces are now occupying leadership roles and are actively participating in peacekeeping missions across the region.

In Senegal, WANEP adopted a gender sensitive community policing approach to drive inclusive security sector reform, particularly in cross-border areas facing persistent security threats. This model fostered collaboration between citizens and police, resulting in greater recognition of women as key actors in the security sector reforms and their increased participation in local security initiatives and security advisory committees.

3.2.1.3. Enhancing Participation of Women in Mediation and Democratic Transitions

WANEP, through its Women, Peace and Security Programme has contributed to advancing women's

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[82] *Guest Blogger for Women Around the World (2020). Women This Week: Making History in Togo.* https://www.cfr.org/blog/women-week-making-history-togo#:~:text=Yes%2C%20there%20are%20women%20leaders%20in%20Togo:,they%20have%20the%20right%20to%20dream%20big.

participation in peace processes and political transitions across West Africa. The network's legacy is rooted in its pivotal role in the Liberian peace process, where sustained women's mobilisation influenced the Accra Peace Agreement, ultimately ending the conflict. This achievement was globally recognised when Leymah Gbowee, then WIPNET (referred to as WANEP's WPS Programme) Coordinator, was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 2011.

Building on this success, WANEP supported women's inclusive participation in political transitions in Burkina Faso, Mali, Niger and Côte d'Ivoire, with the formation of National Women Coalitions (NWC), which enabled their successful engagement with stakeholders. The Coalition members employed institutional diplomacy to strategically advance women's inclusion and influence in governance and transitional processes at multiple levels. The NWC underwent several capacity building initiatives to establish their credibility and influence, allowing them not only to institutionalise a dialogue platform between their leadership and the transition authorities, but also to shape the transitional agenda through well-informed, gender-responsive policy recommendations.

Coalition members across the four countries served in technical commissions on constitutional reforms and reconstruction as gender advisers, directly influencing policy content. In Niger, a coalition member was appointed Minister of Social Affairs, Population, and Solidarity, while other women gained seats on regional transitional councils in Maradi, Tahoua, and Tillabéry, expanding their influence at the local governance level. In Mali, the Coalition efforts led to the appointment of two women to national-level decision-making bodies: One to the National Transition Council (CNT) and the other to the Economic, Social and Cultural Council (CESC.) In Burkina Faso, the Chair of the coalition's training committee was appointed Director of Gender at the Ministry for the Promotion of Women, Children, and the Family. Another coalition member became a member of the Transitional National Assembly.

At regional level, coalition members were involved in advocacy initiatives. In June 2022, members of the NWC in Mali and other women groups met with then Chair of ECOWAS, former President Nana Akufo-Addo of Ghana to lobby for the lifting of economic sanctions imposed on Mali following the 2022 military coup. During the visit, the delegation engaged in intensive advocacy efforts, meeting with various stakeholders to garner support for Mali's economic, social, and security recovery process and the need to mitigate the sanctions' impact on Malian citizens, particularly women. The mission was hugely successful as sanctions were lifted at the ECOWAS summit held later that same month. This development stands as a powerful testament to the critical role women play in negotiation and peacebuilding processes.

WANEP also supported inclusive electoral processes across the region. The network in collaboration with other CSOs

carried out advocacy for reduction of filling fees for women candidates in some countries. A case in point is the successful reduction by 50% of the filing fee for women vying for parliamentary, regional and local elections in Togo to encourage greater representation of women in the political space. Subsequently, the filling fees for legislative initially set at 300,000 FCFA and regional elections set at 150,000 FCFA were reduced by 50% for female candidates.[83] Similar with the local elections where the filing fee, initially set at 50,000 FCFA was eventually set at 12,500 FCFA.[84]

Cross section of WESOC Eminent women, WANEP Executive Director and Programme Director during the visit of H.E Mohammed Ibn Chambas to WANEP's women situation room in Abidjan

WANEP facilitated the establishment of Women Situation Rooms referred to as 'The Women Election Security Observation Centres' (WESOC) during the 2020 elections in Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, and Niger. About 700 women from the three countries were mobilised as election observers, data collectors, analysts, and Eminent Women, all united under a common goal: to reduce gender-based violence, promote women's safety, and ensure their active participation in the electoral processes. WESOC served as a platform for real-time data collection and analysis on women's experiences and participation during the elections. The work of WESOC extended beyond election observation to preventive diplomacy, amplifying women's voices and contributions to peaceful elections.

In Niger, WESOC Eminent Women engaged opposition parties and the ruling parties prior to the election to mitigate tensions and foster dialogue, which contributed to the peaceful conduct of the 2020 election. In Burkina Faso, the WESOC played a crucial role in defusing a post-election political crisis. Following the opposition's rejection of the results declared by the Electoral Commission, the Eminent Women worked alongside UNOWAS and ECOWAS election observation missions to organise a joint advocacy that helped reduced the post-election tensions. These interventions highlight the critical role women play in electoral processes, not only as voters or candidates but also as peace advocates.

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[83] *Gouvernement Togolais (23 Février 2024). Communiqué du Gouvernement. https://x.com/GouvTg/status/1761406255090811287/photo/3*
[84] *Portail Officiel de la République Togolaise (2025). Elections municipales : le cautionnement revu à la baisse, désormais fixé à 25.000 FCFA. https://www.republiquetogolaise.com/politique/2205-10697-elections-municipales-le-cautionnement-revu-a-la-baisse-desormais-fixe-a-25-000-fcfa*

WESOC Eminent women meeting Mr. Soumana SANDA, the coordinator of the opposition party coalition in Niger

3.2.1.4. Enhancing Women's Roles in Peace Infrastructures

WANEP has supported the establishment and functioning of both national and community-level infrastructures for peace, with a strong focus on enhancing women's participation. These platforms have enabled WANEP to consistently advocate for greater inclusion of women in national peace architectures. Subsequently, in Borno state, Nigeria, three women from the WIPNET network were appointed to the Peace and Reconciliation Committee, ensuring that gender perspectives were meaningfully integrated into peace processes, particularly in the context of post-conflict.

In Sierra Leone, WANEP served as a member of several key peace and security bodies, including the Independent Commission for Peace and National Cohesion, the Women Peace and Security-focused CSOs Coalition, the Integrated Election Planning and Security Committee, the Intersectoral Platform on Peace and Security (IPPS), and the National Early Warning Committee.

At the community level, WANEP has trained and deployed over 2,000 women mediators across Benin, Togo, Burkina Faso, The Gambia, Niger, Sierra Leone, Nigeria, and Guinea. These women have been instrumental in mediating community and marital conflicts, thereby contributing to conflict prevention and the reduction of gender-based violence (GBV). Trained women mediators in Adamawa and Plateau States of Nigeria, played a crucial role in diffusing tensions between farmers and herders, and mitigated a longstanding communal conflict in these regions. These efforts have contributed significantly to reduction in intercommunal clashes.

Testimonial 3
N'Djarama Aphouet Adjara
Community Woman Mediator-Togo

"In 2010, I had the opportunity to participate in a training session organised by WANEP Togo on community mediation. That training was a real eye-opener for me. It helped me realise the important role we, as women, can play in promoting social cohesion and peaceful conflict resolution in our communities.

After the training, WANEP Togo facilitated my integration into the peace committee in my community, and I became one of the few women members of the committee. Since then, I have been actively involved in conflict resolution and mediation efforts led by the peace committee. My main responsibilities include facilitating dialogue sessions and raising awareness about the importance of using non-violent methods to address conflicts. One of the most significant mediation efforts I participated in involved a long-standing dispute between Fulani herders and farming communities in the Mango and Gando areas of northern Togo. The conflict, mainly over access to water resources, had caused numerous casualties and significant property destruction over the years. Together with other peace committee members, we organised and facilitated dialogue sessions between the leaders of both groups. Through open and respectful discussions, we helped both parties reach a mutual agreement on how to manage the water resources fairly.

Since then, tensions between the two communities have greatly reduced, and there has been a noticeable improvement in peaceful coexistence."

Excerpt from an interview conducted by WANEP Togo

3.2.2. The Protection Pillar

In advancing the protection pillar, WANEP has supported the development of national GBV laws, coordinated community-based protection mechanisms, and promoted survivor-centred responses. Its initiatives, including Peace Huts and community monitoring networks, have strengthened protection systems and improved access to justice for women and girls. Few examples are as follows:

3.2.2.1. Influencing Policy and Legal Reforms for Protection Against GBV

WANEP supported the development and review of several legal instruments and frameworks in Liberia, including the National GBV Plan of Action, the Rape Law (2005, amended in 2022), the Domestic Violence Act (2019) and the National Action Plan on Gender and SGBV. These instruments provided a coordinated response mechanism against GBV, reinforced accountability and service delivery, and greatly expanded protection for survivors of GBV. In Nigeria, WANEP supported the enactment of progressive subnational laws including the Lagos State Protection Against Domestic Violence Law (2007) and the Edo State's Violence Against Persons Prohibition Law (2021), enhancing legal protection for vulnerable populations and institutionalising mechanisms for redress.

Similar feat was achieved in Sierra Leone where WANEP's contributions helped shaped transformative gender-sensitive legislation with the adoption of the three Gender Acts. Other efforts contributed to the amendment of the Sexual Offences Act (2019), which expanded definitions and penalties related to GBV; The drafting of the Child Marriage Act and the ongoing review of the Child Rights Act, aligning national frameworks with international standards.

In Togo, thousands of women and girls fall victim to GBV every year. In 2022, the country recorded 2,818 people, of whom 2,408 women were victims of GBV.[85] In response to this challenge, WANEP Togo has conducted several awareness campaigns through radio broadcasts and advocacy to denounce and end this practice. In 2023, following the rape that led to the death of a 9-year-old girl, named Josiane, WANEP-Togo took the initiative to form a coalition of civil society organisations called "Josiane Coalition" bringing together 28 organisations to demand justice for the victim.[86] This led to the arrest of the alleged culprit and also to the reparation for the victim's family. Since then, this coalition has proven to be a key player in the fight against GBV in Togo through the effectiveness of its preventing and protecting mechanisms against GBV. WANEP Togo also contributed to the adoption of laws to prevent sexual violence in learning environments, significantly reducing vulnerability among school-aged girls.

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[85] *WANEP Togo (2024). Multi-stakeholder meeting: partnership and quality synergy to further strengthen the fight against GBV in Togo. https://waneptogo.org/site/rencontre-multi-acteurs-partenariat-et-synergie-de-qualite-pour-renforcer-davantage-la-lutte-contre-les-vbg-au-togo/*
[86] *Civil Society Media (2024). (https://societecivilemedias.com/2023/06/21/togo-le-collectif-cosc-j2vbg-demande-justice-pour-josiane-decedee-a-9-ans-des-suites-dun-viol-aggrave/*

3.2.2.2. Utilising Indigenous Community-Based Mechanisms for GBV and Conflict Prevention

At the local level, WANEP leveraged indigenous, community-led mechanisms such as the Peace Huts, to prevent GBV and protect women and girls. The Peace Huts model is fully operational in Liberia and Côte d'Ivoire. The Peace Huts serve as safe spaces for SGBV survivors, where they receive pro bono services in legal, psychological, and medical support through a network of volunteer professionals, lawyers, doctors, and clinical psychologists. In Liberia, the volunteers offer psychosocial support and trauma healing services for SGBV survivors and provide legal representation and follow-up rape and defilement cases to ensure that perpetrators are held accountable and convicted for their crimes.

In Côte d'Ivoire, under the "Restoration of the Rights of Women Victims of Sexual Violence" (PRDF) project, developed in response to the 2011 post-electoral crisis, WANEP established five Peace Huts in Abobo, Yopougon, Duékoué, Man, and Danané. In addition to trauma healing and psychosocial support, the huts raise awareness on women's rights and protection and provide support for income-generating activities, to economically empower them and reduce their vulnerability to GBV.

Community and School-Based GBV Monitoring Units were established in Burkina Faso to provide referrals for survivors, strengthen local protection systems and improve awareness about available services. The Units have contributed to the reduction in GBV incidents,

Peace Hut in Cote d'Ivoire

particularly in the schools. In Nigeria WANEP built a Community Protection Network of 400 community GBV monitors, equipping them with the skills to detect, document, and respond to GBV cases in their localities. These monitors have successfully reported numerous incidents, facilitated referrals for survivors, and worked with local authorities to prevent escalation. In Mali, WANEP collaborated with referral and psychosocial care centres and the National Women's Coalition, protecting women and girls among Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) from GBV and creating information-sharing platforms that foster trust and encourage survivors to speak out. Women were also supported through income-generating initiatives, which enhanced their economic resilience to violence.

3.2.3. The Prevention Pillar

Prevention remains central to WANEP's approach to conflict transformation. Through its well-established National Early Warning System (NEWS), coordinated by the Peace Monitoring Centre (PMC) at the Regional Office, WANEP has institutionalised gender sensitive early warning by developing and integrating targeted indicators on WPS in its early warning system and by training women in early warning, dialogue facilitation, mediation and preventive diplomacy.

3.2.3.1. Strengthening Conflict Prevention Through Gender-Responsive Early Warning

The WANEP National Early Warning System (NEWS) collates, collects and analyses gender-disaggregated data capturing the differentiated impacts of conflict on women and men, and ensuring inclusive and responsive interventions. The data collated has informed the regular production of policy briefs, thematic reports, and WPS-focused publications, which support evidence-based decision-making by national, regional, and international stakeholders. These knowledge products have been widely disseminated and are used by state and non-state actors to design interventions that address security threats affecting women and girls, while promoting inclusive participation in peacebuilding, governance, and decision-making.

At the regional and continental levels, WANEP's strategic partnerships with ECOWAS and the African Union have led to joint actions such as the "Building an Inclusive Post COVID-19 Recovery, Crises Transitions and Governance Reforms in the Sahel and Côte d'Ivoire" project and the development and implementation of regional and continental WPS policy frameworks such as the ECOWAS Gender Policy in 2004 and the African Union Continental Results Frameworks on Women, Peace and Security in 2018. Furthermore, WANEP appointed a Regional Analyst on Women, Youth, Peace, and Security, who works with the Early Warning and Response Team and the Regional Coordinator for WPS to provide timely, context-specific gender analysis and policy guidance that has

enhanced both inclusive early warning and early response mechanisms across West Africa.

3.2.3.2. Conflict Prevention Through Inclusive Dialogues and Strategic Awareness Campaigns

WANEP's bottoms-up approach places community at the centre of conflict prevention initiatives. Through this community-based approach, WANEP regularly facilitated inclusive dialogues and targeted campaigns with relevant stakeholders, including local, traditional and religious authorities, women, youth, and civil society representatives. These dialogue platforms created safe spaces for joint reflection and collaboration, fostered shared strategies to prevent conflict related GBV and strengthened community ownership of peace and protection initiatives.

WANEP also maximised global events such as International Women's Day and the 16 Days of Activism Against GBV, to raise awareness and mobilise public support. In Mali, WANEP, in collaboration with the Association of Bloggers of Mali (ABM) successfully raised awareness on GBV and UNSCR 1325 through a series of targeted digital campaigns.[87] These campaigns served as critical platforms to spotlight the link between GBV and conflict, and to promote women's leadership in peace efforts, resulting in greater public engagement and commitment around GBV prevention and inclusive peacebuilding.

3.2.4. The Relief and Recovery Pillar

As part of its Relief and Recovery interventions, WANEP prioritised women's economic empowerment by providing targeted support for women and girls affected by conflict, displacement, and GBV. Through its National Networks, WANEP supported their rehabilitation and reintegration, championed psychosocial healing, facilitated access to justice and enhanced economic resilience of survivors to reduce their vulnerability to violence. Other WANEP led initiatives under this pillar focused on responding to climate change. This involved actions to reduce community vulnerability to drought and food insecurity; support to the establishment and operationalisation of natural resource management committees; promotion of inclusive participation of women and youth in the response to environmental issues; and strengthening local adaptation capacities. In addition, WANEP's thematic reports and policy briefs on climate change and environmental challenges informed strategic and inclusive responses at regional, national and community levels.

3.2.4.1. Support to Women's Livelihood

Reiterating the importance of improving women's economic resilience, WANEP trained over 2,000 displaced women and girls in Borno and Yobe states between 2021 and 2024. The women were provided vocational and

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[87] WANEP (2022). Annual Report. https://wanep.org/wanep/wp-content/uploads/2023/03/15.03.2023_WANEP_AR47.pdf

livelihood training to enhance their economic resilience and psychosocial recovery. The intervention also included advocacy for the inclusion of women in humanitarian response planning towards strengthening their role in community recovery efforts.

Additionally, WANEP Nigeria in partnership with the Gender Equality Peace and Development Centre (GEPaDC) in Borno State, provided livelihood kits and skills training to young women impacted by insurgency. WANEP supported the registration process for women-led cooperatives in Uneme community, Edo State and Uzizza in Delta State, which facilitated their access to loans and small-scale businesses, as part of efforts to promote sustainable recovery. In Gombe State, WANEP delivered humanitarian assistance to 400 Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs), mainly women affected by communal conflict, under the Project on Amplifying the Women, Peace and Security Agenda.

In Senegal's Casamance region, where one of West Africa's longest-running conflicts continue to affect lives, WANEP supported over 500 women through a comprehensive initiative focused on improving livelihoods and providing access to basic services. WANEP contributed to provision of amenities such as construction of houses that meet hygiene standards, installation of mini-boreholes to improve access to clean drinking water and support for income-generating activities for women. These initiatives contributed immensely to women's economic empowerment and improved community resilience.

In Côte d'Ivoire, through the "Recovery and Economic Empowerment of Women in the West: Seed of Hope" project, WANEP supported 208 women from 17 cooperatives in Duékoué, Bangolo, and Logoualé, areas most affected by the 2011 post-election crisis. Women received business training and economic support to rebuild livelihoods, as well as access to tools and resources to recover from the socio-economic impact of the post-electoral crisis. By combining vocational training and economic support, these interventions have not only addressed immediate humanitarian needs but also built long-term resilience across multiple communities.

3.2.4.2. Strengthening Response to Emerging Threats: Violent

Extremism and Climate Change: Emerging security challenges such as violent extremism and climate change continue to pose significant threats to peace and stability across West Africa. These evolving dynamics have profound implications for the WPS agenda, necessitating adaptive and gender-responsive intervention strategies. Through data-driven programming, strategic partnerships, and strong community engagement, WANEP continued to improve resilience to violent extremism and climate change. The network has reviewed and updated its early warning indicators under the thematic areas of organised crime, violent extremism, and climate change to integrate a gender perspective. Specific response actions have also been conducted across the networks to integrate these new dynamics.

- Interventions and Impact on Addressing Violent Extremism: WANEP Niger empowered hundreds of women and girls, including demobilised ex-militias through skills development, provision of equipment and start-up support. They were also capacitated in strategies for preventing radicalisation and conflict. With the skills acquired and the financial support provided, some beneficiaries now employ other women and girls, contributing to community-level poverty reduction, and resilience. Others now serve as community monitors, strengthening WANEP's early warning and response systems at the community level.

In the Mopti/Djenne region, WANEP Mali, in collaboration with local partners, has enhanced community resilience to violent extremism by placing women and youth at the centre of response strategies. Key results include the establishment of eight community prevention committees with 40% female representation, as well as strengthened economic independence for displaced women through income-generating activities that help reduce their vulnerability to radicalisation. WANEP Togo also supported over 100 women on income-generating activities such as guinea fowl breeding, to strengthen their resilience to violent extremism.

WANEP has equally played a central role in integrating gender perspectives into national strategies to prevent violent extremism. For instance, WANEP holds a seat on the Interministerial Committee on Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism (CIPLEV) in Togo, where it advocates for inclusive, gender-sensitive approaches in the response to violent extremism. Preliminary findings from research on vulnerability factors to violent extremism conducted by WANEP Togo, in partnership with the Interministerial Committee on Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism (CIPLEV), shaped the development of the National Strategy for the Prevention and Fight against Violent Extremism, validated in 2022. In Mali, WANEP collaborated with the Permanent Secretariat for the Prevention of Violent Extremism to support the formulation of the national strategy to prevent and counter violent extremism, ensuring women's roles and experiences are reflected in policy design, implementation and assessment.

- Climate Change and Environmental Resilience: WANEP has been supporting data collection and analysis on human security components related to environmental insecurities, especially along major coastlines in the West African region, using its Early Warning and Response System. The organisation specifically focused on climate induced causes that lead to illegal fishing and mining practices with dire security impacts on women's health and farming. The data has influenced decision makers across the region on environmental issues and informed response actions by its regional office and national networks.

WANEP through the project tagged; Coping with Climate Change as a Cause of Conflict in Coastal Communities of West Africa (C7-WA) helped to strengthen West African

Coastal Communities' resilience to cope with climate change. The intervention involved developing innovative tools related to conflict sensitive climate change adaptation and prevention to monitor the impact of climate change as a driver of conflict. The project also provided opportunity to fund small-scale grant scheme in target communities, given priority to women to enhance their resilience to climate change, while proffering innovative solutions to address the challenge.

SECTION 4:
CHALLENGES AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR EFFECTIVE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE WPS AGENDA IN WEST AFRICA

Despite notable progress, significant challenges persist in realising the full objectives of the WPS agenda in West Africa. This section explores these challenges and proposes strategic pathways and opportunities to sustain and deepen WPS implementation over the next phase.

4.1. Challenges in the Implementation of the WPS Agenda

Several challenges have hindered the effective implementation of the WPS agenda in West Africa, as follows:

4.1.1. Persistent gap between policy and practice

- Lack of political will to translate National Action Plans into concrete, measurable outcomes and enforce effective implementation.
- Despite the adoption of gender quotas and parity laws across several countries, women's participation in peace and decision-making processes remains limited. Where women are represented, their roles are too often symbolic, lacking the meaningful engagement and real policymaking influence needed to drive substantive change.

4.1.2. Inadequate funding

- Financing for WPS NAPs has received limited attention in most national budgets, significantly hindering their implementation and overall impact.
- The short-term nature of WPS funding from development partners has made it difficult to address deeply rooted gender inequalities in a sustainable manner.
- Inability of community-based women organisations to access direct funding due to inflexible funding mechanisms has weakened the impact of WPS initiatives at the local level.

4.1.3. Lack of a localised approach and ownership of the WPS at community level

- Many national policies and frameworks on WPS do not reflect the daily realities of women and girls at community levels.
- Language barriers further limit accessibility, restricting the participation of community women in the implementation of the WPS agenda.
- Elite-centred approach to WPS implementation where local women groups are disconnected from actual implementation weakens its relevance and impact on the ground.

4.1.4. Political and security instability in the West African region

- Political instability due to unconstitutional changes of governments, and electoral violence have diverted attention and investments from the WPS agenda
- Emerging threats such as violent extremism and climate change have disproportionately impacted women, deepening existing vulnerabilities and disrupting WPS progress.

4.1.5. Fragmentation approach to WPS implementation

- Fragmented implementation of the WPS agenda as a standalone rather than being integrated across national development plans and priorities has limited its ownership and effective impact.

4.1.6. Entrenched patriarchal norms and economic inequalities

- Deep-rooted social and cultural beliefs continue to hinder women's active participation in decision-making and peacebuilding. This includes:
- Gender stereotypes: Prevailing views often discourage or delegitimise women's leadership, reinforcing perceptions that peace and security decision-making are "men's domains."
- GBV and threats: Women leaders and peacebuilders frequently face violence, intimidation, and harassment, which discourage active participation and undermines safety.
- Economic inequalities: Unequal access to resources impedes women's economic empowerment and limits their ability to participate fully in political processes.
- Barriers to inheritance and property rights: Though some countries have undertaken legal reforms, making provision for women to inherit land and own property or wealth, in practice, traditional norms continue to hinder effective enforcement of these laws.

4.1.7. Lack of intersection between the WPS agenda, humanitarian response and women's livelihoods

- The WPS agenda is often viewed through a security lens, sidelining the humanitarian and livelihood components, which limits its real impact on women and girls.

4.1.8. Lack of a support system and intergenerational solidarity to advance the WPS agenda

- Women leaders often lack sustained backing by women groups and support networks to create collective power that can challenge patriarchy, demand accountability and sustain long-term peacebuilding efforts.

- Lack of mentorship and leadership development pathways for young women in peace and security to create a momentum on the WPS agenda.

4.1.9. Lack of data-driven accountability and institutional framework to assess progress on WPS

- Poor documentation and inadequate dissemination of WPS outcome limits opportunities for replication and scaling of best practices.
- Ineffective enforcement mechanisms such as oversight bodies, and poor monitoring and reporting systems in many countries make it difficult to track progress, ensure accountability, and inform evidence-based decision-making for advancing the WPS agenda.
- The lack of synergy among actors weakens policy coherence and fails to deliver tangible results.

4.2. Rethinking UNSCR 1325 Implementation and Future Projections

Addressing the WPS gaps require critical rethinking and refocusing to ensure the WPS agenda remains relevant, impactful, and inclusive. To achieve this, it is important to act on the following:

4.2.1. Bridge the gap between policy and practice

- This involves instilling political will for effective implementation and enforcement of WPS commitments.
- Creating an enabling environment for women leadership development to enable them have real power to influence and lead change.

- Repositioning women's participation as a core security investment across all peace and security interventions, including counterterrorism strategies, transitional governance and security sector reforms.

4.2.2. Foster long-term approach and flexible funding for WPS

- Sustain gains of the WPS agenda by moving from short-term projects and funding to long-term programming and funding.
- Continued advocacy for an increased budget allocation by Governments to support implementation of WPS.
- Prioritise and secure dedicated WPS Trust Fund to support implementation of NAPs with flexibility terms to facilitate access by community women-led groups.

4.2.3. Prioritise the localisation of the WPS agenda

- Ensure the WPS agenda, is locally grounded, addressing the specific security challenges faced by women and girls in their communities and implementing actions in local languages.

4.2.4. Address political and security instability undermining the WPS Agenda in West Africa

- Reinforce advocacy for the integration of WPS priorities into crisis response and transitional governance mechanisms, including charters, peace agreements, and constitutional reforms.
- Promote regional peer review mechanisms that assess member states' adherence to WPS commitments during political and security instability.
- Support women-led early warning systems and community peacebuilding initiatives, particularly in border and conflict-prone areas to support conflict prevention efforts.

4.2.5. Integrate and mainstream WPS Agenda across sectors and National Development Plans

- Institutionalise WPS across sectors and ensure priorities in NAPs are embedded in national development plans and policies to strengthen ownership, maximise resources and impact.

4.2.6. Diversify approaches to address patriarchal norms and women's economic empowerment

- Partner with traditional leaders, religious institutions, and local influencers to challenge discriminatory gender roles and support inclusive peacebuilding and governance processes.
- Utilise technology, storytelling, drama and community dialogues to shift perceptions of women's roles in peace and governance.
- Engage men and boys as champions of gender equality, especially within security institutions, local governance, and traditional structures.
- Address GBV and political harassment by enforcing zero-tolerance policies on GBV and harassment across sectors and at all levels.
- Strengthen protection mechanisms for women and young women against GBV by operationalising the One-Stop centres in all the countries for holistic and effective response.
- Push for legal reforms that criminalise GBV in politics and peacebuilding.
- Promote women's property rights and economic empowerment to reduce their vulnerability to violence.

4.2.7. Strengthen intersection of the WPS Agenda

- Break silos between the WPS agenda, humanitarian response and women's livelihoods, by shifting from protection only to prosperity-based prevention
- Promote women's economic empowerment as a pillar of peacebuilding through prioritising land rights, providing access to finance, vocational training, and entrepreneurship during transitions as well as in post-conflict recovery and reintegration programmes.
- Support women's leadership in climate adaptation and in the response to violent extremism

4.2.8. Institutionalise intergenerational solidarity to advance the WPS Agenda

- Bridge the intergenerational divide by building solidarity and infrastructures for knowledge sharing and mutual support between women of different generations, backgrounds, and experiences to ensure sustainability of the WPS agenda.
- Protect and sustain safe physical and digital spaces where women and young women can connect, plan, and mobilise around WPS.

4.2.9. Support evidence-based advocacy and policy formulation/review

- Develop a robust monitoring and reporting system by ensuring WPS NAPs include clear, measurable indicators, timelines, and responsibilities for monitoring progress, leveraging the Continental Results Framework on WPS.
- Ensure collection of sex-disaggregated data and gender analysis in early warning, peacekeeping, and humanitarian assessments
- Create mechanisms to replicate and scale-up women-led peacebuilding success stories to enhance visibility.
- Strengthen collaboration with academia to support research on WPS that inform policy developments.

4.2.9. Strengthen coordination mechanisms for accountability on WPS Agenda

- Strengthen accountability mechanisms, both within the UN system and among Member States to uphold and advance WPS commitments.
- Deepen collaboration among all stakeholders, including governments, civil society, private sector and development partners to optimise resources and amplify impact, especially in the context of dwindling financial support.
- Establish multi-sectoral coordinating mechanisms such as WPS implementation committees that bring together government, civil society, security institutions, and international partners to coordinate planning, funding, and monitoring. Also ensure these bodies are empowered to make recommendations and influence policies.

4.3. Opportunities to Advance Implementation of the WPS Agenda

Several opportunities exist to advance the implementation of the WPS agenda as follows;

- Existing Frameworks: Continental, regional, and national WPS frameworks, such as National Action Plans and gender policies, could be leveraged to secure political will and provide a foundation for effective implementation. The recently adopted African Union Convention on Ending Gender-Based Violence further provides opportunity to strengthen response and accountability on GBV.
- Technology and Innovation: Emerging technologies can be utilised to improve access to real-time data, strengthen monitoring, and enable more responsive interventions on WPS.
- The landmark celebrations of UNSCR 1325 and the ongoing review of the Peacebuilding Architecture offer timely opportunities for enhanced alignment, especially as several countries are currently reviewing or renewing their National Action Plans (NAPs). Targeted support to these processes can help embed stronger accountability and financing mechanisms from the outset, while addressing other challenges.

- Women's leadership in informal economies and social networks is an untapped force. With proper investment, they can lead the shift from protection to prosperity-based peacebuilding.
- Civil society networks, such as WANEP, offer ready and credible partnerships for community implementation, real-time monitoring, and early warning.
- The existence of a critical mass of WPS expertise and platforms at regional, national and local levels that offer opportunity for collective, structured and transformational actions that can impact positively on women and girls, but also on the entire regional stability and prosperity.

Conclusion

As West Africa marks twenty-five years of the Women, Peace and Security (WPS) agenda, it is evident that meaningful progress has been achieved, yet challenges remain. The region has witnessed commendable strides in policy development, the establishment of National Action Plans, and increased advocacy for women's participation in peacebuilding. These gains, however, have not always translated into sustained structural change. The gap between commitment and implementation continues to undermine impact, compounded by persistent insecurity, political instability, shrinking civic spaces, and entrenched patriarchal norms.

Through its sustained engagement, WANEP has remained a key regional actor in advancing the WPS agenda by institutionalising gender in peacebuilding processes, strengthening early warning mechanisms, and supporting community-based women's mediation and dialogue initiatives. Its interventions at regional, national and community levels have demonstrated that peacebuilding is most effective when women are empowered as agents of change rather than viewed solely as beneficiaries of protection.

Looking ahead, the 25th anniversary of UNSCR 1325 presents both a moment of reflection and a call to renewal. Advancing the WPS agenda over the next decade requires deepening political will, ensuring sustainable financing, and anchoring WPS priorities within broader governance, humanitarian, and development frameworks. It also demands that women's participation be recognised as a core security imperative, not an add-on to peace processes.

Ultimately, realising the full promise of the WPS agenda in West Africa depends on closing the gap between aspirations and actions. This calls for stronger accountability, inclusive partnerships, and an intergenerational commitment to transforming the structures that perpetuate gender inequality. By sustaining its collaborative, inclusive and evidence-based approach to peacebuilding, WANEP, together with regional and national partners, is well positioned to help drive this transformation toward a more peaceful, just, and gender-inclusive region.

Annexture

Annex 1: **Some National Legal Frameworks on GBV**

COUNTRY	LEGAL FRAMEWORK
Benin	• Law No. 2021 of 20 December 2021 on special provisions for the punishment of offences committed on the basis of the sex of persons and the protection of women in the republic of Benin • Law No. 2013-01 of 14 august 2013 on the land and property which condems discrimination based on sex or social origin • Law No. 2011-26 of 9 January 2011 on the prevention and punishment of violence against women • Law No. 2006-19 on the elimination of sexual harassment and protection of victims • Law No. 2003-03 on the elimination of female genital mutilation
Burkina Faso	• Law No. 10/2016 of 5 September 2016 on the fight against sexual harassment in the workplace. • Law No. 061-2015/CNT of 6 September 2015 on the prevention, punishment and reparation of violence against women and girls and protection of victims in Burkina Faso • Law No. 043/96/ADP amending the Penal Code to prohibit and punish the practice of female genital mutilation
Cape Verde	• LAW No. 84/VII/11, on Gender-Based Violence, and the National Plan to Combat Gender-Based Violence (2007-2011). • Social Security System (2009), which covers women and men working in the informal sector, and establishes equal treatment in maternity leave for women working in the public and private sectors • Dacree-Law No. 50/2009, which provides protection for domestic workers, majority of whom are women. • Labor Code (2008), which contains a chapter specifically dedicated to women's rights

COUNTRY	LEGAL FRAMEWORK
Côte D'Ivoire	• Law No. 2015-10 of 24 November 2015 revising the penal code, which punishes sexual harassment and domestic violence as separate offences and provides appropriate penalties. • Law No. 2013-451 of 19 June 2013 on the fight against cybercrime and trafficking in pornographic images • Law No. 98-750 of 23 December 1998 on rural land tenure, promoting equal access to land • Law No. 98-757 against female genitale mutilation
Gambia	• The Women's (Amendment) Act of 2015, which addresses Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) • Domestic Violence Act 2013 • The Sexual Offences Act of 2013
Ghana	• The Domestic Violence Act of 2007 (Act 732) • The Human Trafficking Act, 2005 (Act 694), providing protection against trafficking, a form of GBV • The Criminal Offences Act (Act 29), 1960, addressing offenses such as rape, defilement, and indecent assault
Guinea	• Criminal Code (2016) with article 259 targeting Female Genital Mutilation/Cutting (FGM/C) • Law No. 2015-067/ASS/AN (2015), enacted to prevent, condemn, and punish rape and other sexual violence. • Law No. L/2014/072/CNT of 10 January 2014 on the Labour Code, affirming the principle of non-discrimination in the area of employment
Guinea Bissau	• Penal Code Amendments (2021), increasing penalties for sexual offenses and specifically addressing GBV • Law No. 14/2011 on female genital mutilation • Domestic Violence Act 2008
Liberia	• Domestic Violence Act passed in 2017 • The Rape Act

COUNTRY	LEGAL FRAMEWORK
Mali	• Law No. 2015-052/ of 18 december 2015 instituting measures to promote gender in access to nominative and elective positions. • Act no. 01,079 of 20 August 2001 on sexual harassment
Niger	• Law No. 2003-25 of 13 June 2003 promulgated in 2004 (amending the Penal Code) criminalizes female genital mutilation, sexual harassment, and rape. • Act No. 2000-008 on the establishment of a quota system for women-only positions in decision-making bodies
Nigeria	• The Violence Against Persons (Prohibition) Act (VAPP) was enacted in 2015 at the federal level . From 2019 to date, more states have incorporated the Prohibition of Violence Against Persons Act (5 in 2019 to 26 in November 2021).
Senegal	• National Plan to Combat Violence against Women for the period 2019-2024 • Law No. 2020-05 of 10 January 2020 on sexual harassment • Law of 30 December 2019 on the criminalisation of rape in Senegal • The Family Code of 1972: stipulates equal access to land for men and women.
Sierra Leone	• Domestique violence law, 2021 • The Sexual offences (Amendment) Act 2019
Togo	• Law No. 2022-020 on the protection of learners against sexual violence in Togo • Law No. 2003-25 of 13 June 2003 promulgated in 2004 amending the Penal Code criminalizes female genital mutilation, sexual harassment, and rape in Togo

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