



WANEP News

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WANEP News

Welcome to WANEP News, a quarterly E-Newsletter of the West Africa Network for Peacebuilding, (WANEP). It will provide substantive information on our work in a breezy yet informative style, detailing the communities we serve, the principles underpinning our work and our key achievements. WANEP News is a platform to keep our key partners and major stakeholders abreast with our intervention strategies towards promoting a peaceful environment in the region and beyond and the key lessons from the field.

As always with our tradition and in the spirit of partnership, networking and community ownership, WANEP News will also feature collaborative efforts with tactical partners in achieving peaceful co-existence as an avenue for experience sharing and best practices. We will also highlight WANEP's social events and Teambuilding strategies in both narrative and pictorial formats.

WANEP News is telling our story our own way!

Happy Reading!

WANEP, Critical Stakeholders Call for Peaceful Elections in Nigeria

The responsibility of peace and security resides with governments and its agencies. However, civil society organizations overtime have demonstrated their capacity and competence to influence policies on peace and security and complement government's efforts in ensuring the stability of the state. The need for civil society to accompany government efforts at national, regional and continental levels cannot therefore be over-emphasised.

The West Africa Network for Peacebuilding, WANEP, with support from the governments of Austria, Denmark and Sweden organized a two day Multi-stakeholders National Consultation in Abuja, Nigeria to assess the state of readiness of key institutions and stakeholders to prevent and mitigate threats to peaceful conduct of the 2015 elections under the chairmanship of Professor Attahiru Jega, Chairman Independent National Electoral Commission, INEC, Nigeria.

Critical stakeholders including state and non-state actors from Nigeria, Ghana and Sierra Leone comprising representatives of government, ECOWAS, election management body, media, CSOs, international development partners, academia, and women groups attended the meeting.

The consultation sought to create space for information exchange on the electoral process and collaboration amongst key stakeholders; enhance public confidence in the electoral process and the electoral management bodies among others. At the end of the highly participatory meeting, participants acknowledged that everyone has critical roles and responsibilities towards ensuring a peaceful electioneering process in Nigeria.



WEST AFRICAN NETWORK FOR PEACEBUILDING
Stakeholders Consultative Meeting on Peaceful Elections and Transition in Nigeria
A Multi-Track Diplomacy Approach

KAIPTC, WANEP Renew MOU



WANEP Executive Director, Mr. Emmanuel Bombande in a warm handshake with the Commandant of KAIPTC, Maj. Gen. Obed Boamah Akwa after signing the MOU

The West Africa Network for Peacebuilding (WANEP) and the Kofi Annan International Peacekeeping Training Centre (KAIPTC) reaffirmed their commitment to the promotion of peace and stability in the region through the renewing and signing of another five-year Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) in Accra, Ghana on 18th March, 2014. At the ceremony, of WANEP Executive Director, Mr Emmanuel Bombande expressed appreciation for the great partnership between the two institutions and stressed that it is important and strategic for civil society and state agencies to work together in ensuring peace and security.

In his response, the Commandant of KAIPTC, Maj. Gen. Obed Boamah Akwa also expressed immense

confidence in the collaboration with WANEP and said he foresees the relationship between the two institutions growing from strength to strength in their efforts to build sustainable peace and security not only in West Africa but in Africa as a whole.

WANEP is partnering with KAIPTC in coordinating the West Africa Peacebuilding Institute (WAPI) which is hosted at KAIPTC every September.

2015 Elections: "Nigeria Must Get It Right"

It is a great privilege to convene this very important meeting leading to the electioneering processes in Nigeria and which will serve as a platform for identifying the challenges of the election with a view to working collaboratively towards addressing them. As Nigeria goes to the polls early next year beginning on a very significant day of Valentine, for the general and presidential elections, the strategic importance of this meeting cannot be overemphasized.

Reports from the WANEP Nigeria National Early Warning System (NEWS) has in the recent past continued to flag the 2015 elections as a potentially decisive moment that could either consolidate or undermine the fragile peace and the strides Nigeria has made in its democratic principles and ideals amidst challenges of insecurity in the North East, the oil bunkering and sabotage in the South, the kidnappings in the East, the ethnic militias in the West among others. The report clearly indicated that if the elections are managed properly, it will help steer the country into rapid development and growth as envisioned in the country's vision 2020 and better position her amongst the MINT (Mexico, India, Indonesia, Nigeria and Taiwan) nations. On the other hand, were the elections to be rocked by serious disputes and major violence, the risk of political instability would be significantly increased and the insecurity in the various parts of the country phenomenally higher.

As the implementing partner of ECOWAS in the operationalization of the ECOWAS Early Warning Mechanism (ECOWARN) and the lead organization for peace and security in the AU SSOC and the JAES process, WANEP has been monitoring and analyzing elections and electoral processes in West Africa for the past decade. Throughout this period, WANEP has worked closely with various stakeholders to support free and fair elections.

In the electoral processes of South Africa, Ghana, Togo, Guinea, Cote d'Ivoire and recently Egypt, WANEP worked assiduously with various stakeholders including ECOWAS, AU and the UN



**Mr. Emmanuel Bombande,
Executive Director, WANEP**

**Excerpts from a
paper presented by Mr.
Bombande at the
Stakeholders Consultative
Meeting on Peaceful
Elections in Nigeria**

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different dispute resolution mechanisms to ensure a reduction in electoral disputes. Through this experience, WANEP has come to realize that electoral dispute mechanisms are sine qua non in the struggle to promote free, fair and transparent elections in our region.

Nigeria is the predominant power in West Africa and regarded as one of the African Union's "BIG FIVE". It is therefore imperative that we end this meeting with an unwavering conviction that we will all work together to ensure that Nigeria gets its election right and provide the leadership it MUST provide to guarantee the stability of the region. As we say, "when Nigeria catches cold, the region sneezes." Let me therefore end by congratulating you and the Independent Electoral Commission for the giant strides you have made in your electoral process especially under the current Chair and urge you to demonstrate your patriotism in this election



Mr. Frank Mba, Police Public Relations Officer, in a chat with WANEP Executive Director, Mr. Emmanuel Bombande and Program Director, Mr. Chukwuemeka Eze during the Stakeholders Consultative Forum in Nigeria

and prove to the world that indeed you are the true "giant of Africa!"

EVENTS... EVENTS... EVENTS

WANEP DEDICATES AWARD TO PEACEBUILDING PRACTITIONERS

The West Africa Network for Peacebuilding (WANEP) was the only African Civil Society Organization honoured among 20 other award recipients at the 2nd Kofi Annan-Dag Hammarskjold Annual lecture and awards ceremony at the Kofi Annan International Peace Keeping Training Centre (KAIPTC) in Accra, Ghana on 11th March, 2014 during the 10th anniversary of the institute. WANEP was honoured as a result of its exemplary strategic partnership with KAIPTC in the design and delivery of courses in peace and security, its work on peacebuilding in the region and its support in the growth and strengthening of the centre.



Receiving the award on behalf of WANEP Management and Staff, Mr. Vincent Azumah Regional Coordinator Monitoring and Evaluation expressed profound appreciation to KAIPTC and the Dag Hammarskjold Foundation for the honour stating “WANEP is dedicating this award to the people of West Africa whose daily struggles for peace and security in their communities continue to strengthen our resolve to work for a more peaceful, prosperous and integrated West Africa.”



Nafisatu Yussif and Afua Gyapomaa of ABANTU meeting with WANEP team; Queeneth Tawo and Kesia-Onam Birch

ABANTU REPS VISIT WANEP OFFICE

Representatives of the ABANTU for Development, Nafisatu Yussif and Afua Gyapomaa, Advocacy, Partnerships and Networking and Research and Publications Officers respectively paid a working visit to the WANEP regional office to discuss possible areas of collaboration between the two organisations on women, peace and security.

The two organizations are both working to promote the effective participation and involvement of women in the peace processes. The two organizations discussed possible areas of collaboration such as training, capacity building, and advocacy and indicated in the dissemination of the National Action Plan on United Nation Security Council Resolution UNSCR 1325.

The team was received by the Regional Coordinator Programs, Ms Queeneth Tawo and Ms Kesia Onam-Birch, Program Coordinator, Women in Peacebuilding Network (WIPNET).

PUBLICATION ON GENDER BASED VIOLENCE LAUNCHED IN COTE D'IVOIRE

In the framework of WANEP's partnership with the Crisis Management Initiative (CMI) in implementing the Gender Based Violence and Peace Mediation Project, the two organizations launched a publication on Gender Based Violence in Cote D'Ivoire.

The publication is the outcome of two case studies conducted in Liberia and Cote d'Ivoire and is expected to serve as a critical resource for deepening expertise on gender-based violence in peace mediation.

The joint project implemented by CMI and WANEP sought to increase gender expertise in local and international mediation teams in West Africa by identifying strengths and shortcomings of existing initiatives on gender-based violence and providing technical guidance to existing structures with regards to peace and mediation processes.

The publication is an outcome of two

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battre les violences faites aux femmes c'est participer à la consolidation



Presentation of the publication to Madame Fofana Kaba, Director, Ministry of Women in Cote d'Ivoire



WANEP National and Regional Staff with consultants at the Participatory Review Analysis Processes (PRAPs) in Beige Resort, Eastern Ghana.

Below, staff brainstorm during the teambuilding sessions



WANEP REPOSITIONS FOR EFFECTIVE PROGRAMMING

As part of strategies to strengthen its institutional capacity and position the organization as a leading professional peacebuilding institution in the region WANEP held a Participatory Review and Analysis Processes (PRAPs). The meeting aptly titled “Sustaining WANEP’s Institutional Capacity for Conflict Prevention in West Africa” brought together WANEP staff from the 15 national networks across the ECOWAS member states and the regional office was facilitated by a seasoned consultant, Rev John Nkum. The review meeting was held to discuss key institutional issues and strengthen staff capacity in program implementation and technical harmonization towards reposition the institution from Project Driven to Vision Driven Organization to ensure that WANEP serves as a think-tank to intergovernmental organizations and other key partners.

In his welcome remarks at the occasion, WANEP Executive Director, Mr. Emmanuel Bombande said that the underlying principles of peacebuilding is collective ownership, “we all have a different role to play but we work together as a team,” and charged the staff to be proud of their contributions to the organization.

In the same vein, the Program Director, Mr. Chukwuemeka Eze also called on staff to ensure that the services WANEP offers is sustainable and in line with our proven expertise. He said for any organization

to be sustainable, it must have a clear succession plan saying, “let your peacebuilding expertise determine how you design your sustainability plan.” A key outcome of the meeting was the production of a concrete outline for the development of a five-year Strategic Action Plan (2015 to 2020).

.....GETS GLOBAL RECOGNITION

The West Africa Network for Peacebuilding, WANEP is increasingly gaining global recognition and acceptance as a formidable peacebuilding institution based on its unique network structure says Mr. Chukwuemeka Eze, WANEP Program Director. He made the assertion while addressing WANEP staff during the Participatory Review and Analysis Processes (PRAPs). Mr. Eze said in view of this, it is imperative for WANEP to reposition itself from “an organization that is project-based to one driven by vision.”

The Review process was an avenue to collectively develop the WANEP Strategic Action Plan (2015 to 2020) which aims at providing early response to early warning. Mr. Eze added that the emphasis on early response is to consolidate the 2010 -2014 strategic plan which focused on the establishment of national early warning systems in the 15 ECOWAS member states as well as ensuring that WANEP remains relevant to ECOWAS, AU and member states in the peacebuilding continuum.



Program Director, Mr. Chukwuemeka Eze

'WANEP MEN' CELEBRATE WOMEN'S ACHIEVEMENTS ON INTERNATIONAL DAY

In the spirit of partnership and working with men as allies, the WANEP Women in Peacebuilding Program, WIPNET conducted spot interviews with the male colleagues to share their views on women's achievements throughout the ages and the inspiring roles women play in society both at the family, community, national and regional levels. Here are some of the memorable quotes from our male colleagues;

EXPLORING POLICY OPTIONS FOR SUSTAINABLE PEACE

Exploring policy options for practical conflict transformation interventions that could enhance mediation efforts and contribute to stability and sustainable peace dominated discussions at the ninth Mediation Support Network, MSN, meeting held in Durban South Africa on March 26 to 28, 2014.

The meeting themed "Transforming Societies through Peace Mediation: A Critical Reflection from the MSN," was attended by 11 MSN member organisations. WANEP was represented by two key staff; the Program Director, Mr. Chukwuemeka Eze and Administrative Manager, Mrs. Esther Gordon-Mensah.

The meeting was an avenue for experience sharing and knowledge exchange. Some of the case studies discussed included WANEP mediation processes in Jos Plateau state of Nigeria, Negotiating South Africa's post-apartheid transition, South Africa's 20 years of 'peace': the transformation journey, Finding the synergy: the nexus between conflict transformation and mediation among others.

The case study from Jos highlighted local level mediation efforts using a bottom-up approach which is aimed at transforming relation between the communities and creating policy framework for structural change. A key lesson from this strategy is that the involvement of key actors that support the transformation of the process from the start facilitated their ability to understand the situation and attempt to implement the recommendations. The strategy of communities sitting together and sharing openly enabled them to dispel the lack of trust and develop confidence that encouraged the groups to work together.



WANEP Program Director, Mr. Chukwuemeka Eze and Admin Manager, Mrs. Esther Gordon-Mensah with other participants at the meeting

Emmanuel Bombande: "I recognize women in Ghana, West Africa and the continent who have inspired their society despite all odds and specifically want to appreciate the WANEP women for all their efforts in peace times and during challenging periods both in the family and at official levels."

Mr. Chukwuemeka Eze, "What inspires me about women is the contributions they have made in the peacebuilding continuum in Africa; particularly their role to recovery in post-conflict situations and peace processes. I strongly believe that for every reconciliatory and reconstruction process to be complete, women and children in refugee camps have to be reintegrated into the society."

Alimou Diallo, : "Several women have done great things and championed equality for women at all levels. In the past one year, Hilary Gbedema, a Ghanaian lawyer and human rights activist has greatly inspired me via her commitment to the development of a policy document."

Vincent Azumah: "I am inspired by a poor woman who was enslaved in a barbaric custom in Southern Ghana where women were kept at shrines to serve the priest. Upon gaining her freedom, the woman stood her grounds and spoke against the practice which led to the enactment of a law prohibiting such practice. I wish such laws will be replicated in Benin and Togo, where the practice also exists."

Gideon: "Women have served as role models to a lot of people especially in post-war torn countries. I am inspired by women like Ellen Sirleaf Johnson, the first female president in West Africa who has influenced women in other countries to push for equal positions in their societies."

Raymond: "I advocate for gender equality between women and men at all levels of the society with particular emphasis on education of the girl-child as a panacea to individual and societal growth."

Francis: "women are very significant in our lives as mothers, wives, sisters and friends. My grandmother played the crucial role of a mother to me and taught me the importance of a woman in a man's live. I call for increased sensitization to end all forms of Gender based violence against women."

Kwesi: "My mother greatly inspires me in all endeavors. Based on her valuable advice and insights on issues, she has earned the respect of women and men from all works of life. Because of the important role women play in the society, I am advocating for gender mainstreaming in governance positions in West Africa and education for women."

Bismark: "An old woman in Tema West community greatly inspires me via her zealous efforts in mobilizing women in the community to engage in small scale enterprises in order to support their husbands in the upkeep of the family."

WANEP SOCIALS

WANEP STAFF URGED TO “KEEP-FIT”

As part of efforts to ensure work—life balance, WANEP recently set up a befitting Gym room at the regional office. Declaring the Gym open, WANEP Executive Director, Mr. Emmanuel Bombande stated that this has become imperative to ‘prevent staff burn out.’ He said as an organization focused on promoting peace and stability, WANEP staff need to be in a peaceful and conducive environment to actualize the organizations mission and vision.

Below are some staff members during work out sessions at the Gym and at the Beige Resort.



Happy Birthdays to all the staff who marked their birthdays in the following months;

Gideon	Jan 12
Kwesi	Jan 21
Esther	Jan 26
Edwige	Feb 17
Queeneth	Mar 16
Alimou	Mar 24

WHO WE ARE

The West Africa Network for Peacebuilding (WANEP) was conceived in 1996 but formally launched in 1998. Unlike other activist organisations, WANEP strategically chose to engage major actors, particularly government actors in a bid to establish a platform for dialogue, experience sharing and learning, thereby, complementing efforts at ensuring sustainable peace and development.

WANEP is a member of the Peace and Security cluster of the African Union’s (AU) Economic and Social Council –ECOSOCC representing West Africa and also has a Special Consultative Status with the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC). WANEP is the Regional Initiator and the current Chair of the Global Partnership for the Prevention of Armed Conflicts (GPPAC).

OUR GOAL

WANEP’s cardinal goal is to build sustainable peace, thereby creating an enabling environment for development in West Africa.

WHAT WE DO

WANEP work covers eight critical areas of intervention including;

- The West Africa Peacebuilding Institute (WAPI)
- West Africa Early Warning and Response Network, (WARN)
- Women in Peacebuilding (WIPNET)
- Non-violence and Peace Education, (NAPE)
- Civil Society Coordination and Democratic Governance Program, (CSDG)
- Responding to Conflicts through Dialogue

WHERE WE WORK

WANEP’s growth and influence has been phenomenal. After 15 years of peacebuilding practice, WANEP has grown to become a household name in West Africa with national offices in all the ECOWAS Member countries, and over 500 member organisations spread all over WA.