

WANEP News is a quarterly E-Newsletter of the West Africa Network for Peacebuilding, (WANEP). It provides 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.

In a nutshell, **WANEP News** is telling our story our own way!

Happy Reading!

WANEP Recounts Progress at Review Meeting



WANEP's Role in the current Peace and Security Architecture of Africa was the theme of the biennial Participatory Review and Analysis Processes (PRAPs) held at the Chances Hotel, Ho in the Volta Region from February 2 to 4, 2016. The meeting which brought together all National Network Coordinators, Zonal Coordinators, WANEP Liaison Officer to ECOWAS and Regional staff also discussed the growth of the organization from transition to consolidation.

PRAPs provides a vital platform for improving and strengthening WANEP's continuous monitoring and learning culture through the Network Accountability Learning and Planning System (NALPS). This year's meeting was specifically held to assess operations of the organization, identify achievements and challenges, and deepen understanding of the relationship between WANEP and regional/continental partners. A seasoned Organizational Development Expert, Rev John Nkum who is also a member of the WANEP Regional Board, facilitated the meeting with Mr. Ato Kwamina Nkum as co-facilitator.

The meeting was also an opportunity for bonding between WANEP Management and staff through the various team building activities. Significant outcomes included the development and harmonization of work plans and new organogram among others.

More pictures on page 6

R2P Report Unveiled in Ghana, Liberia and Sierra Leone

On 25th February 2016, the West Africa Network for Peacebuilding (WANEP) officially presented report of the year-long research on the Responsibility to Protect (R2P) to Government representatives, International partners, Civil Society, Academia and the Media. The event held at the Coconut Grove Regency Hotel in Accra, Ghana. The ground-breaking study was undertaken by WANEP in partnership with the Embassy of Denmark in Ghana. The report was

also officially launched in Liberia and Sierra Leone.



Above left; participants at the Accra R2P report dissemination workshop and right Dr. Memunatu Pratt presenting the report to stakeholders in Sierra Leone

The study is part of WANEP's contribution to ongoing efforts at building institutions that can promote human rights, protect human lives and prevent mass atrocities. It provided a platform for a deeper understanding between theory and practice of the Responsibility to Protect (R2P) as well as deepen discourse on enhancing institutional collaboration towards the effective implementation of R2P in Ghana and West Africa.

Dr. Philip Attuquayefio, Research Fellow at the Legon Centre for International Affairs and Diplomacy (LECIAD) delivered the keynote address at the Accra meeting titled "The Place of R2P in the Current Peace and Security Environment in West Africa." Dr. Attuquayefio, in line with the key findings of the report described R2P, as a "Viable mechanism for nurturing and building political will at national regional and international levels to prevent violent conflicts and protect civilians". Speaking in the same vein, Dr. Memunatu Pratt of the University of Sierra Leone in her keynote address during the presentation of the report in Sierra Leone, recommended the strengthening of human rights and governance institutions including the peace and security frameworks of ECOWAS in order to actualize the effective implementation of R2P in the region. The selection of Ghana as a main case study was based on Ghana's position as a reference point of a maturing and sustainable democratic state reaching the economic status of a lower middle-income country.

TALKING PEACE

WANEP Remains Leader in Peace and Security in the Region —Prof Isaac Albert



This year's theme for the Participatory Review and Analysis Processes (PRAPs), "WANEP's Role in the Current Peace and Security Architecture in Africa: From Transition to Consolidation" is apt and prods us to work with an increased verve towards the actualization of our shared vision. This I say with a deep sense of responsibility and extraordinary confidence that these will be achieved with flair. This is an excellent opportunity for members of the WANEP family to deliberate on policies, operations and challenges of the organisation and devise strategies to make the organisation more efficient and relevant. Of utmost significance to this retreat is to reach a comprehensive decision towards the operationalization of our new strategic plan spanning 2015-2020. I therefore, from the outset urge you to take the deliberations seriously and to be bold in making those proposals that would continue to unite our institution and place us as the prime institution for peace and security in Africa.

We thank God and recognize the pivotal role played by our management, staff and partners alike, that has persistently enabled us make our modest contributions in the arena of peace and security and how those contributions continue to reshape the face of peacebuilding on the continent. Without the individual and collective support and cooperation of all of you, it

would have been difficult to make any progress. Our resilience, as a team, remains the greatest and most valuable asset of which our institution can boast of. I consider myself extremely fortunate to be the leader of such an institution to continue to wax strong even in the face of obvious difficulties.

WANEP as an organization has always shown leadership in the area of peace and security and with the current strategic plan, WANEP builds on its successes while taking into account current demands and dynamics. As a matter of priority, the strategy focuses on the enhancement of our partnerships with intergovernmental organisations such as the AU and ECOWAS in a bid to support efforts being made by these organisations to confront current and emerging peace and security challenges. The states have been unequivocal in their acceptance that they cannot do the business of peace and security alone. We have a rare opportunity to provide the needed support and seize the space through our core programme areas of women in peacebuilding, peace education, dialogue and mediation, research, training and advocacy.

I use this opportunity to commend the management of WANEP for their sustained commitment towards the actualisation of the strategic plan. My colleagues and I on the board will give you all the necessary support as you implement these new changes embedded in our transition plan that would enable us consolidate our institution.

Ladies and Gentlemen, let me once again welcome you to this important reflections and planning and remind us all that "teamwork divides the task and multiplies the success."

Goodwill Message from Prof. Isaac Olawale Albert, WANEP Regional Board Chair to the 2016 Participatory Review and Analysis Processes (PRAPs)



Conflict and Peacebuilding in West Africa: The Media as Friends or Foes by Chukwuemeka B. Eze, Executive Director, WANEP

Democratic transitions remain a challenge to peace and stability across West Africa. It is estimated that more than 10,000 citizens have lost their lives in political crises in the last decade. Elections have been marred by spates of violence, with electoral periods often occasioning great fear for life and property among the populace. Regrettably, a few leaders in the region continue to nurture the possibility of long-term rule even if that means manipulating and influencing constitutional changes to extend their stay in power beyond the limited term mandates in constitutions. Such practice is exacerbating the crisis of political stability, undermining good governance and breeding extremist groups. The economic potential of the region is further undermined by instability and violent conflict. In other words, peace and security are pre-requisites for sustainable economic development and human security advancement in the short term, whereas in the long term human-centred economic development that will eradicate extreme poverty is a pre-requisite for durable peace.

To this end, ECOWAS has driven a paradigm shift from unilateral and state-centric action, to a multi-stakeholder's participation of the media and other civil society. The role of the media therefore in promoting human protection in conflict areas has become increasingly important as ECOWAS and governments in the region seek integrative approaches to address insecurity and instability under its vision 2020 – transitioning from ECOWAS of the states to ECOWAS of the people.

The Media, or the "Fourth Estate" plays a crucial role in building an accountable state and society, whether at the national or local level. It should be a critical part of the triangular relationship between state, citizens and information, which helps to ensure responsiveness of government to the people. Free media can act as an echo chamber for discontent within society as citizens express their priorities and concerns. Without this pressure valve, discontents are more likely to be expressed through explosive public protests or acts of violence. Thus, a free and independent media's contribution to peace building is the restoration of the free flow of information and opinion. In the best of times, journalism practice in Africa is a difficult way to earn a living. Even in relatively peaceful times, it can be a downright dangerous profession. In the traditional view of journalism, practitioners are expected to report events as neutrally and accurately as possible.

It is therefore right to conclude that, the media, whether electronic or print, private or public, wield so much influence in peace and security. The choice of making the media friend or foe is a function of our actions. Meetings and trainings like this provide opportunity for articulation on how we address the challenges that present the media as foes rather than friends in conflict management and strengthen them as partners in progress.

Part of a keynote address delivered at the School of Information and Communication Studies, Legon Centre for International Affairs and Diplomacy (LECIAD)

EVENTS! EVENTS! EVENTS!

WANEP NEWS Steering Committee Chair Appointed Minister

Madame Mariatou Koné, Chair of the WANEP NEWS Steering Committee under the WANEP-USAID Early Warning project has been appointed Minister of Solidarity, Social Cohesion and Compensation for Victims by the newly elected Government of Cote d'Ivoire. Madame Kone who is also an alumnus of the WANEP run West Africa Peacebuilding Institute (WAPI) was until her appointment, the Director General of the National Programme for Social Cohesion (known in French as "Programme National pour la Cohesion Sociale – PNCS), a position she assumed in 2012.

As Director General of PNCS, Professor Kone has been working closely with WANEP Cote d'Ivoire to build infrastructures for peace as part of the process of ensuring social cohesion.

This latest appointment is another feather in her cap of achievements: In December 2015, Madame Mariatou Kone, who is a Professor of Anthropology was listed in the top 100 most influential Africans by the Pan-African Magazine New African. She is the first and so far, the only Ivorian woman Full Professor of Anthropology and the first woman Director of the Institute of Ethno Sociology (IES) at the Félix Houphouët - Boigny University, Abidjan-Cocody in Cote d'Ivoire where she has been a teacher-researcher since 1995.

ESUT Vice-Chancellor Hosts WANEP

The Management of WANEP comprising Executive Director, Mr. Chukwuemeka Eze and Program Director, Mrs. Levinia Addae-Mensah met with representatives of the Enugu State University of Science and Technology (ESUT) to commence discussions on establishing a peace and conflict studies department in the institute. The University currently does not have a peace and conflict studies department.

The meeting set out modalities for setting up the department including roles and responsibilities. At the end of the highly successful meeting, WANEP presented key publications on peace and security from the WANEP stable to the Institution. Picture right shows WANEP Executive Director, Mr. Chukwuemeka Eze making the presentation to the Vice-Chancellor of ESUT, Professor Gabriel Onah Christopher.



tor, Mr. Chukwuemeka Eze and later held discussions with the Program team led by Program Director, Mrs. Levinia Addae-Mensah.

The visit was specifically to have a deeper understanding of the nexus between Peacebuilding and Peacekeeping within the context of Peace and Security challenges in West Africa and learn more about WANEP's contributions to promoting peace and security in the region. The team was also interested in peacekeeping operations in the region especially the challenges and shortcomings of peacekeeping in West Africa. Another point of discourse bordered on the events in Mali and the Sahel and what WANEP's contributions have been. WANEP in collaboration with GPPAC and Human Security Collective (HSC) is implementing a Human Security project in Mali.



Above left; Representatives from the Commonwealth Foundation with WANEP staff. Right, WANEP Program Director, Mrs. Levinia Addae-Mensah receives a memento on behalf of WANEP from a member of the Japanese delegation and below, WANEP program staff with the Japanese delegates

COURTESY VISITS

Representatives from the Commonwealth Foundation visited the WANEP Regional Office on March 11, 2016 to learn about WANEP's work, and its interaction with ECOWAS. The Commonwealth Foundation team comprising Min Garcia (Deputy Director), Reineira Arguello Sanjuan (Senior Programme Officer-Governance) and Gillian Cooper (Senior Programme Officer- Capacity Building), met with the WANEP program team led by Executive Director, Mr. Chukwuemeka Eze. The visit was an opportunity to explore areas of convergence in terms of program implementation and share experiences for future collaboration. During the visit, the two organizations gave overviews of their work in the region as well as discuss salient issues of peace and security especially the role of civil society organizations in the regional integration discourse. The Foundation works in four strategic areas with a major focus on participatory governance.

Similarly, a three-member team from Japan paid a working visit to the WANEP Regional Office, on January 26, 2016. The delegation comprised officials from the Defence Ministry of Japan, the Japanese Foreign Ministry and the First Secretary of the Embassy of Japan in Ghana. The delegates were received by WANEP Executive Director,



From The Field



ELECTION SITUATION ROOM

WANEP in collaboration with other key stakeholders set up Election Situation Rooms (ESR) in Benin and Niger, whose elections took place early in the year. The first round of elections in Niger was funded under the Joint Financial Agreement (JFA) while the second round was funded by USAID/REWARD under the Mitigating Electoral Violence project.



WANEP, Key Stakeholders Monitor Elections in Benin and Niger

The West Africa Network for Peacebuilding (WANEP) in collaboration with other key stakeholders set up Election Situation Rooms (ESR) in Benin and Niger, whose elections took place early in the year. In Niger, the ESR was facilitated by WANEP in partnership with the Young African Leaders Initiative (YALI), National Democratic Institute (NDI) and the Peace Development Project (PDEV), while in Benin, the ESR was organized by the Electoral Platform of CSOs led by WANEP.

The organizations experience and expertise in running the Election Situation Rooms have received wide commendations and appreciation from key partners and critical stakeholders including the Special Representative to the UN Secretary General for West Africa and the Sahel, Dr. Ibn Chambas. WANEP has been monitoring and analyzing elections and electoral processes in West Africa for well over a decade. WANEP operates under the undergirding philosophy of collaborative approaches to Peacebuilding, which is aimed at creating an enabling electoral environment before, during and after the elections. In addition, WANEP's approach is to establish platforms for monitoring election results and for mediation of disputed discrepancies resulting from the elections.



The ESR was a platform for data gathering and analysis before, during and after the elections and created visibility through media attendance to all declarations and communiqués presented. It also provided the opportunity for effective and timely information sharing between the ESR and key intergovernmental institutions such as ECOWAS, AU and Organization Internationale de la Francophonie (OIF).

Election Situation Room pictures from Benin and Niger

In preparation for the elections in Benin and Niger, WANEP as the leading CSO for peace and security in West Africa met with various stakeholders in the field and held media briefings to generate awareness on the ESR. The ESR hosted key partners and critical stakeholders from government, inter-governmental agencies and International Development partners. Mr. Emmanuel Bombande, WANEP immediate past Executive Director, who is now the Special Adviser to Dr. Ibn Chambas, Special Representative to UNOWAS also visited the ESR in Niger. Picture on the right shows Mr. Bombande flanked by Vincent Azumah, WANEP M&E Coordinator (left) and Ifeanyi Okechukwu WANEP Coordinator Early Warning (right)



From The Field

Accelerating Women's Political Participation

Worried by the continuous slow pace of women's participation in decision-making, especially in the political process, the West Africa Network for Peacebuilding (WANEP) in collaboration with the Legon Centre for International Affairs and Diplomacy (LECIAD), University of Ghana held a Panel Discussion on the theme: "Pledging for Parity: Accelerating and Increasing Women's Political Participation through Transformative Strategies in West Africa." The Forum was in commemoration of the 2016 International Women's Day (IWD) and provided a platform to raise critical issues on women's participation in political processes and interrogate the lack of transformative intervention strategies that will increase their participation.

In a keynote address by Professor Henrietta J.A.N. Mensa-Bonsu, Director of LECIAD and delivered on her behalf by Dr. Linda Darkwa, she noted that 21 years ago, the world pledged to promote women's rights and work towards attaining gender parity by 2030. Recounting the successes, she pointed out that a lot more girls are presently in school than was the case 21 years ago and added that, in many West African countries, women have gotten to and in some instances, broken the glass ceilings that inhibited their full participation in formal socio-economic and political settings. Despite this forward leap, she however stressed that, there are still many miles to go adding; "even though women today have more opportunities than they did twenty-one years ago, structural challenges significantly limit the ability of many women to take advantage of those opportunities and to fully realize their potential."

Speaking in the same vein, Mrs Levinia Addae- Mensah, WANEP Program Director said that as a number of countries in the region were poised for elections this year, the theme for the celebrations could not have been more appropriate and called on participants to reflect on why women still lagged behind despite the numerous interventions over the years. The target audience for the forum included students from Ghana's tertiary and senior high institutions, civil society groups, government institutions and Gender Focal Persons.



Above Right: Program Director, Mrs. Levinia Addae-Mensah, Dr. Linda Darkwa of LECIAD and Bijoue Kesia-Onam, WANEP Program Officer, WIPNET.
Below Right: Panelists; Hon. Mrs. Ursula Owusu Ekuful, MP, Mr. Chika Anikwe, Project Manager, Joint Party Support and Strengthening Project (UNDP); Professor Audrey Gadzekpo, Dean, School of Information and Communication Studies and Mrs. Queeneth Tawo, WANEP Regional Coordinator, Communications

WANEP National Networks Mark 2016 International Women's Day

WANEP National Networks through the WIPNET program held series of activities to commemorate the 2016 International Women's Day. Some of the activities included live radio and television panel discussions, roundtable fora and debates on the progress women have made for equal participation in the democratic process.

The occasion was also used to showcase women's contributions to peace and security through art exhibitions, sport activities among others. A press release by WANEP Regional office to mark the occasion acknowledged the progress women have made so far but urged greater involvement of women in decision-making. It called on key stakeholders to prioritize the women agenda. It was widely circulated in the media.



Above left and middle; women groups and representatives of the Security Sector at the IWD celebrations in Buchanan City Grand Bassa County, Liberia. **Right:** students of Doland International Schools, Akute, Ogun State, Nigeria at the talk show organized by WANEP-Nigeria to mark IWD

Events! Events!! Events!!



PRAPs in Pictures

Above left: WANEP Regional Board member, Rev John Nkum who also facilitated the meeting reading the goodwill message on behalf of the Regional Board chair, Prof Isaac Albert.

Above right: Executive Director, Mr. Chukwuemeka Eze, delivering his welcome address

Below left: WANEP staff reciting the organization vision and mission statements

Below left: snacking time!



Team Building Sessions: WANEP Directors (above left) moderating the Quiz sessions. Winners of the Quiz competition celebrate their victory (middle) and show off their winning plaque (above right)

Executive Director (Right) kicks off the novelty match which was won by the regional team. (Below left) the winning team in victory celebration. (Below right) the team pose with their trophy!



WANEP Socials

BIRTHDAY Felicitations!



Gideon Abotsikpui - Jan 12



Kwesi Enchill - Jan 21



Queeneth Tawo - Mar 16



Seth Akrong—Feb 7



Edwige Mensah - Feb 17

Esther Gordon-Mensah—Jan 26

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.

OUR WORK

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.