



WEST AFRICA NETWORK FOR PEACEBUILDING



ANNUAL REPORT 2007

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Building Relationships for Peace

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ABOUT WANEP

The West Africa Network for Peacebuilding (WANEP) is a not-for-profit organisation working in collaborative peacebuilding. WANEP was founded in 1998 as a response to the civil wars that plagued West Africa in the late 1980s. WANEP has National Networks in twelve of the fifteen countries in West Africa and will soon expand to Cape Verde, Mali and Niger. Its Regional Secretariat is located in Accra, Ghana. Currently, WANEP network membership is over 450 Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) spread across its 12 national networks throughout West Africa.



VISION

“A West Africa region characterized by just and peaceful communities where the dignity of the human person is paramount and where the people can meet their basic human needs and decide their own direction.”

MISSION

“To enable and facilitate the development of mechanisms for cooperation among civil society-based peacebuilding practitioners and organizations in West Africa by promoting cooperative responses to violent conflicts; providing the structure through which these practitioners and institutions will regularly exchange experience and information on issues of peacebuilding, conflict transformation, social, religious and political reconciliation; and promoting West Africa's social cultural values as resources for peacebuilding.”

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

- Strengthen the capacity of peacebuilding organizations and practitioners in West Africa to engage actively in the transformation of violent conflicts through the use of non-violent strategies
- Develop a conflict prevention mechanism in West Africa to monitor, analyze and respond to conflicts
- Engender peacebuilding policy and practices in West Africa
- Promote a culture of non-violence and social responsibility among young people in West Africa
- Strengthen the conceptual base of WANEP programs through research, documentation and Monitoring and Evaluation.
- Enhance policy formulation and influence on peace and human security through regional and international linkages and advocacy.

Message from the Board Chair: A DECADE OF PEACEBUILDING: 1998-2008.

In 1998, WANEP was formally launched as a network organization aimed at harnessing civil society and community-based peacebuilding efforts and initiatives in West Africa. This noble idea was borne out of the experience of a human disaster created by the mayhem of the wars in Liberia and Sierra Leone. One of the peculiarities of Liberian and Sierra Leonean wars was that victims were mostly children and women and the brutal hacking of limbs was a psychological wound that some survivors would live to remember. These atrocities were committed mostly by the youthful combatants including child soldiers who were forcefully recruited by both the rebel and desperate government forces. Taking advantage of the structural weakness of the states, the rebellious and revolutionary syndrome was rapidly consuming the sub-region.



the sub-region, expertise in mediation and reconciliation in communities, institutional capacity building are some of the areas that WANEP has made an enormous contribution. We thank our array of partners and donors who supported us in these endeavors. The irony of peace work and particularly conflict prevention is that when you succeed or contribute towards success, the world does not know and it is as if nothing happened.

Let me end by Congratulating WANEP staff and management for stemming the tides enormous challenges and remaining focused on the noble objectives for which the organization was created. As we celebrate Ten Years of Peacebuilding through networking and partnerships, we have every reason to hope for a better tomorrow. The Holy Book says, blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called the children of God. May God bless WANEP in 2008. Happy Anniversary.

Rev Professor E.A. Anyambod
Board Chair, WANEP

It was in this context that WANEP started its journey towards helping to build peace and stability in West Africa. Peacebuilding interventions in Sierra Leone, Northern Ghana, and Liberia rapidly imbued the organization and unlike other nascent structures, WANEP rapidly gained credibility and visibility in a phenomenal style. From an organization of few member organizations, WANEP now counts more than 460 member organizations ranging from community based structures to national coalitions, including well-known international NGOs. The message of WANEP remains unique and the same: we can only build effective peace through synergies, coalitions, partnerships and cooperation with one another. No one individual or organization can claim absolute ownership of successful peacebuilding. We cannot also do it without appropriate and strategic partnerships with governments and other relevant decision makers. WANEP understood this and entered into a strategic partnership with the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) with the financial support from the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) West Africa Regional Program.

I am particularly delighted that in barely Ten Years, WANEP has proved beyond doubt that a people with a vision and determination can never perish. The accomplishments are legion and since peace work is not an event, but a continuum, the transformation of communities and mindsets over time may not be easily measured and appreciated now. The trained and capacitated pool of women peacebuilders and activists, the acquisition of skills and knowledge in conflict and human security early warning and early response, the search for just peace throughout

The West Africa Network for Peacebuilding (WANEP) continued the pursuance of its mission to promote cooperative responses to violent conflicts in West Africa with motivation and commitment during the year 2007. With its new strategic direction, the National Networks now assume full responsibility for implementing programs at national level while the regional secretariat provided technical support and expertise in coordinating knowledge and facilitating experience sharing amongst the networks. In Mali, Niger and Cape Verde, WANEP now has a focal presence with the resolve to establish functional national networks in the near future.



At the institutional level, WANEP's particular attention to institutional strengthening and organizational development is yielding good results. The National Networks are now vibrant: member organizations rally together on national issues such as elections to coordinate collective actions to prevent violence. There is increasing harmonization of administrative and financial procedures while each national network is supported by the regional secretariat to sustain financial viability and autonomy. These efforts will be deepened in the next few years as WANEP positions itself to be financially viable with national networks being capacitated to fund raise and build strategic partnerships for long term peace building efforts.

During the year under review, WANEP completed the second phase of the *Capacity Building Program* funded by the USAID: *Enhanced Conflict Prevention Framework for ECOWAS and Civil Society Organizations*. The successful implementation of the program produced useful lessons on Civil Society Partnerships with Inter-Governmental Organizations. WANEP partnership with ECOWAS increased further while planning for the third phase of enhancing a collective effort to sustain and build on the ECOWAS Conflict Prevention System. In addition to being the regional initiator for West Africa and secretariat for the Global Partnership for the Prevention of Armed Conflicts (GPPAC), WANEP hosts the Africa Desk of the Women Peacemakers Program (WPP) in collaboration with the International Fellowship of Reconciliation (IFOR). This partnership reinforced the leadership role of women in peace building through the WPP and the Women in Peacebuilding Program (WIPNET).

The visibility of WANEP in the sub-region made it possible for new partnerships and possibilities. Across the sub-region, WANEP has

worked in the past years with an array of international peacebuilding organizations. In 2007, German Development Cooperation- GTZ provided funding support for the West Africa Peacebuilding Institute (WAPI) with the commitment to providing similar support in 2008. Since 2002, WAPI has provided intensive training courses on various subjects in peace building for up to 213 practitioners. Its scope now extends to the entire African continent. In 2007, WAPI attracted UN staff and practitioners from Australia, Germany and Sweden. Under its Justice Lens program, WANEP joined the Nairobi Peace Initiative-Africa in a major research project on *Transitional Justice Experiences and the Rise of Truth and Reconciliation Commissions: Emerging Lessons and Implication for post-conflict societies*.

A major highlight in WANEP's partnerships in 2007 was with the Government of Finland in the implementation of the project: *Integrated and Collaborative Conflict Prevention and Crisis Management in West Africa*, for which WANEP received a grant for institutional support, program development and implementation. In the framework of the implementation of WANEP's strategic plan, the new partnership with the Government of Finland provided a unique alternative to funding and a confidence measure to WANEP's donors of the viability of the organisation and its capacity to attract funding from multiple sources. Through the GPPAC International Secretariat, WANEP established partnerships with the German and Norwegian Governments through their respective Ministries of Foreign Affairs. The willingness of Governments to support civil society peace building efforts is a good indication of the appreciation of the impact of peace building activities at track two level.

The year under review was full of activity and very rewarding. Whereas the challenges to human security, peace and stability persists in West Africa, there is increasing resolve and determination by civil society actors to collaborate, develop joint activities to prevent and transform violent conflicts. This is manifested in the collective actions of members of the WANEP Network. It is therefore with profound gratitude that we celebrate the efforts of all member organizations as WANEP prepares to celebrate 10 years of peace building work in West Africa. We equally recognize and appreciate the work of other civil society networks we have been collaborating with.

We are most grateful to the Government of Finland for their support to WANEP. Through the GPPAC International Secretariat, we thank very much the contributions of the Governments of Norway and Germany for sustaining efforts at peace building in West Africa. We sincerely

thank USAID-West Africa Mission for their support and partnership in the implementation of ECOWARN. CORDAID throughout the years stood by WANEP and supported its institutional sustainability and program development. We continue to be very grateful. We are also grateful to the Ghana Research and Advocacy Project for institutional support to the Regional Secretariat. In 2007, WANEP worked with several partners who provided funding for various peace building activities. While we appreciate the support of all these partners, special mention goes to Oxfam Great Britain for the WIPNET program in the Mano River Union (MRU) countries, Oxfam Novib for WANEP-Nigeria's WIPNET programs, IBIS West Africa for the Justice Lens program and the West Africa Human Rights and Democracy Project. The others are Catholic Relief Services for the USAID Capacity Building Program and GTZ for the West Africa Peacebuilding Institute. From the national to regional levels, WANEP collaborated and worked with UN agencies including UNDP-Ghana, UNDP-The Gambia, United Nations Integrated Office in Sierra Leone (UNIOSL), UNIFEM, UNICEF and the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA).

With deep sense of gratitude, WANEP continues to appreciate its partnership and the work with the ECOWAS Commission and directly with the Observation and Monitoring Center (OMC) of the Department of Political Affairs, as well as Peace and Security. The opportunity for CSO-ECOWAS collaboration at several levels and with various CSOs in West Africa has proven invaluable in lessons learnt and accomplishments made. Through the toil and commitment to promote peace, may the people of West Africa experience peace and prosperity in all aspects of human development.

Emmanuel Bombande
Executive Director
For Management Team

The year 2007 was one of mixed blessings for West Africa. The state of political governance, the economic challenges, and the social and environmental situation, the security environment coupled with cross border issues, largely preoccupied policy makers and major stakeholders as well as civil society. As WANEP deepened its collaboration with the Political Affairs, Peace and Security (PAPS) division of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) through the further development and enhancement of the ECOWAS early warning system (ECOWARN), we observed trends and challenges which are briefly highlighted in this overview.



WANEP-Sierra Leone intervenes to settle a minor incident during the elections

On the political front, 2007 was another year of elections. Elections in West Africa, like elsewhere in the world, are critical moments in the life of a nation. Elections, therefore, are no longer issues of national sovereignty or internal affairs in Africa. They have become issues of regional and sub-regional concern, as

electoral violence and its spill-over effects such as refugee movements and the humanitarian crisis know no boundaries. It was against this backdrop that Nigeria, Sierra Leone, Senegal and Mali went to the polls. The April elections in Nigeria produced Yar'Adua, candidate of the People's Democratic Party, (PDP) as the President of Africa's most populous country. The controversies that trailed the elections dragged on and by December 2007, the court's verdict on the issue was still awaited as the opposition claimed the elections were marred by massive irregularities and rigging. Popular opinion and analysts hold that once the "Big Brother"-Nigeria holds its axe right in matters of political culture, particularly electioneering, the rest of Africa would take the relay.

Sierra Leone sailed through its post-war transition as Ernest Koroma, leader of the main opposition party emerged the winner of the presidential elections that pitched him against former vice president Solomon Berewa. Mali equally had a successful election in which Amadou Toumani Touré (ATT) was re-elected as president. While the culture of democracy continues to be engrained in Mali, the emerging

consensus characterized by the weakening of the opposition and shift towards the ruling party, is worth noting. In Senegal, President Abdoulaye Wade was equally re-elected in an election that was largely boycotted by the main opposition parties. Parliament in Senegal that registered one of the most spectacular power alternations in Francophone Africa in the last decade is now a mere monolithic one. The elections in Togo were unique in the sense that for the first time, ECOWAS deployed a completely military observation team made up of senior officers including Generals. The handshake between Gilchrist Olympio and Faure Eyadema after the highly contested elections was as significant as it was historic. We recognize the fact that elections per se do not constitute democracy but they contribute to the overall enhancement and consolidation of the democratic process as they define and determine access to power.

An important event of the year was the celebrations marking the 50th anniversary of Ghana's independence. It was not just the grandeur, pomp and pageantry that marked the March 2007 celebrations of its independence, but the spirit of patriotism that it ignited in Ghana. To give the anniversary the importance it deserved, the African Union (AU) Summit of 2007 was held in Ghana, the birth place of Africa's lead advocate for African unity, Dr Kwame Nkrumah. The 2007 AU Summit debated the African Union Government, although the idea was not conclusive, much to the chagrin of today's ferocious advocates like Muammar Gadhafi of Libya whose trip to Ghana was remarkable. The Libyan leader drove on land (something very rare of African leaders who fly in presidential jets) from Tripoli through Mali, Guinea, Sierra Leone, and Cote d'Ivoire, and lived with the realities with the masses, even if his critics remain suspicious of his motives.

Poverty and rising cost of living remained a major challenge for West Africans. The rising market prices for petroleum oil in particular had adverse consequences in West Africa as pump prices soared and consequently propelled transportation and production cost. Angry demonstrations against government inability to address the mounting cost of living in Guinea, Niger, and Senegal resulted in massive destruction, loss of property and lives. In Guinea in particular, the anarchy that ensued from confrontation between the soldiers and soldiers on the one hand, and soldiers and the masses on the other hand, demanding the departure of ailing President Lansana Conté led to invocation of Martial Law. An ECOWAS-brokered peace deal between the government and trade unions saw the appointment of a new Prime Minister, Lansana Kouyaté as a compromise head of government.

WEST AFRICA IN 2007: AN OVERVIEW OF PEACE, CONFLICT AND HUMAN SECURITY

The gloomy economic situation in West Africa is characterized by mass unemployment, under-employment and high level of corrupt practices and embezzlement or diversion of public funds. Anti



Source of image: Abidjan.net

corruption and graft initiatives have not been able to yield desired fruits. The future seems uncertain and the situation of youths, in these highly indebted nations, now constitutes a veritable challenge, a time bomb. One of the consequences of this has been reports of massive exodus of West Africa's energetic youths to Europe. The youths have defied the scourging heat of the Sahara desert and the deadly waves of the Mediterranean and Atlantic waters and are ready to die rather than stay home.

The phenomenon of human and drug trafficking became more alarming in 2007. Media reports of major seizures of hard drugs in West Africa revealed a growing phenomenon that may soon engulf the sub-region. Efforts at governmental level remained minimal given the lucrative nature of the trade that is often associated with arms trade and operated by sophisticated and sometimes highly influential networks. As countries like Guinea Bissau, Cape Verde, Senegal, Ghana, Liberia and Nigeria continued to fight the drug trade, fear is that the implication of security services in some of these countries would greatly undermine the struggle. Drug cartels that have undermined governments in Latin America are now using West Africa as transit route to Europe. The threats posed by drug trade and its consumption constitute a major security issue, with its national and cross border implications.

The successful broking of peace processes in Cote d'Ivoire and Togo by President Blaise Compaoré of Burkina Faso buttressed the fact that Africans can find solutions to African problems, hence validating the concept that successful peace processes are internally generated and externally supported. The Ouagadougou Peace Accord between President Laurent Gbagbo and Guillaume Soro took the Ivorian crisis to a level unprecedented. The former rebel leader, Guillaume Soro entered into direct talks with President Gbagbo and was appointed

Prime Minister. The failed assassination attempt on Soro averted a major setback to the peace process. Nonetheless, the hurdles of organizing a free, fair and transparent election remain a major challenge.

Having played a fundamental facilitation role in bringing the Togolese opposition to the negotiation table, WANEP continued to mobilize civil society and engage governments and opposing forces, both discretely and overt, on the need for dialogue as a strategy for building durable peace and preventing violent conflicts. Our task has been to streamline efforts and harness our resources to effectively monitor, analyze and proffer responses to the threats to peace and human security in West Africa. This demands a lot of commitment, field knowledge and above all sustainable support and strategic partnerships with key partners and major stakeholders. WANEP's philosophy of peacebuilding has always reposed on collaborative efforts, engaging the main actors, deepening peacebuilding practice through focused training and learning by doing.

WANEP's role and place remains unique. This unique role is very much exemplified in the ECOWARN process. Thanks to our vast network of over 450 member organizations spread over the fifteen ECOWAS member countries and our ability to



ECOWARN: Participants of the Anglophone training in Accra during a practical session

oscillate the pyramid from grassroots organizations at bottom to decision making organs at apex, passing through national government at middle, our capacity to influence policy is in no doubt. As ECOWAS finalized its Conflict Prevention Strategy Framework which WANEP and other civil society groups and experts largely and actively participated in its production, we can thus make sense of the statement 'to be forewarned is to be forearmed.'

We look forward to 2008 with excitement as we are proud to be an active partner in building sustainable peace in Africa.

In line with the new strategic direction and repositioning informed by the on-going restructuring program, the WANEP regional secretariat no longer directly implements activities at national level. The regional secretariat only provides technical support and quality control to national networks in the implementation of activities. In the year under review, the regional secretariat was involved in various activities under its core programmatic areas.

WIPNET PROGRAM

The Women in Peacebuilding Program (WIPNET) of WANEP is committed to ensuring that women's needs, concerns and issues are mainstreamed into all formal and informal peace building processes in West Africa. Since 2002, through a program called *Women's Peace Activism*, WIPNET has been mobilizing women's groups to promote social justice in West Africa where patriarchy has kept women marginalized and excluded from the decision making table. In the Mano River Union (MRU) region, which comprises of Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone, capacity building and radio programs were carried out for community women groups aiming at enhancing their knowledge and skills, as well as providing them the platform to reach out to their communities in order to influence change (for details, see activities report of national networks of Guinea, Sierra Leone and Liberia).

In its efforts to make available the WIPNET manual in local languages to facilitate understanding and training, the regional secretariat in collaboration with its national networks translated the manual in Creole and Malinke dialects in Sierra Leone and Guinea respectively. Currently, the manual has been translated into French and other local dialects in Liberia, Nigeria and Senegal. A community radio program called the **"Voices of Women"** has become a valuable tool in reaching out to greater numbers of women engaging in community issues that are an impediment to peace and human development in West Africa. **The Voices of Women program is aired** in Guinea, Liberia, Nigeria, Senegal and Sierra Leone.

To close the year, the Regional Secretariat hosted the 5th edition of the WIPNET annual conference in



Liberia: Women at work on one of AJWS-sponsored community agriculture projects in Kakata, Margibi County

Accra, Ghana. The theme was on ***the role of women in early warning and conflict prevention***. A total of 37 women from across West Africa took part in the conference.

JUSTICE LENS PROGRAM (JLP)

Under its Justice Lens Program (JLP), WANEP seeks to mainstream the rights-based approach into peace building. The goal of the program is to build a culture of sustainable peace, justice and conflict prevention in West Africa through the integration and harmonization of peace building and human rights methodologies, strategies, and initiatives.



Cote d'Ivoire: Group photo of national consultation participants

National networks in Cote d'Ivoire, Guinea, Liberia, and Sierra Leone successfully carried out a mapping exercise of all organisations working on peace building, conflict management, small arms and light weapons, human rights and the media. These different actors formed a coalition for experience sharing on the integration of human rights perspective into their routine activities and for identifying early warning indicators in their respective countries to input into the regional ECOWAS Early Warning program implemented in partnership with WANEP. In all four countries, lists of identified organizations with contact information were compiled and circulated to facilitate subsequent collaboration. In addition to the mapping exercise, national consultations on human rights and early warning were organized in the four countries. The outcome of these consultations showed that marginalization, social and political exclusion have been and still remain the fundamental cause of conflicts in these countries. Another national consultation was held in Ghana that brought together peace building practitioners, human rights actors and the media at a side event during the Ordinary Session of the Africa Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights.

THE WEST AFRICA PEACEBUILDING INSTITUTE (WAPI)

For the past 6 years, WANEP has been providing specialized, intensive, and context-specific training in peace building and conflict transformation through its West Africa Peacebuilding Institute (WAPI).

From September 3 to 21, 2007 with financial support from the German Technical Cooperation (GTZ), WAPI has hosted a total of 39 participants from Across Africa, Australia, Germany, Sweden and USA at the Kofi Annan International Peacekeeping Training Centre in Accra, Ghana. The seventh edition is scheduled for September 1st-21st 2008.

THE GLOBAL PARTNERSHIP FOR THE PREVENTION OF ARMED CONFLICT (GPPAC)

As the Regional Initiator for GPPAC in West Africa, WANEP organized national consultations in 10 countries to strengthen civil society collaboration in conflict prevention while promoting human security and sustainable peace through collective action. In 2007 with support from the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, three main activities were undertaken namely: the recruitment of a Regional Liaison Officer (RLO) to serve as a liaison between WANEP and the GPPAC International Secretariat in order to further enhance Civil Society engagement at community and governmental levels. This has also been to be able to build and sustain the cooperation between Civil Society and UN partner agencies. As such, a national consultation was created under the theme “Promoting Human Security and sustainable peace through collective action” in Niamey, Niger from August 14 – 15, 2007 and participation in the International Steering Group (ISG) meeting of GPPAC from the 9th to 13th October in Soesterberg, The Netherlands where important decisions on program planning and implementation and budgeting were reviewed and adopted for the coming years. As a key member of the task force on Early Warning and Early Response (EWER), WANEP gave an overview of the EWER experience sharing seminar that was held in Accra in August 2007. WANEP shared its experience on how the ECOWAS Early Warning system was developed in West Africa which has become a model for other regions to replicate.



Niger Consultation participants

TRANSITIONAL JUSTICE

WANEP collaborated with the Nairobi Peace Initiative (NPI)-Africa based in Kenya to conduct a research on transitional justice in Africa. The research sought to examine the rise of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) as a



Sierra Leone: Lead Researcher sits (in spectacles) amongst the group

preferred model of transitional justice in Africa in dealing with the political changes and to explore popular perceptions of its responsiveness to the challenges of dealing with past atrocities, injustices, individual and communal traumas. WANEP's responsibility was to bring out insights and highlight lessons and questions emerging from transitional justice experiences in the West African context. Though the research focused mainly on Ghana, Sierra Leone and Liberia, lessons learned in other countries were also taken into considerations to enrich the research findings. The final findings of the study would be made public in 2008 to contribute towards the understanding of transitional justice process and providing suggestions and recommendations to shape future policy choices for countries in the preparatory stage to embark on similar journey.

WANEP BENIN

In partnership with CRS Benin, WANEP Benin facilitated a seminar on inter-faith dialogue in Parakou in March 2007. 25 participants were drawn from various religious groups. The outcome of the seminar made it possible to create an interim working committee to follow up on concrete recommendations put forward in order to promote tolerance and cooperation among the different faiths in Benin. In the same month, the national network joined other members to observe and monitor the parliamentary elections across the country. In October, the network actively participated in the Global Police Visit, a *weeklong visit to police stations* (PSVW 2007) which was coordinated by ALTUS ; a network of organizations working for the improvement of public safety and justice in the world. The national secretariat also participated in several meetings with local partners aimed at enhancing good governance in Benin.

WANEP-BURKINA FASO

The national secretariat hosted a seminar to share research findings provided by GERDDES (*Groupe d'Etudes et de Recherche sur la Démocratie et le Développement Economique et Social*), a founding member of WANEP-Burkina on the **Obstacle to free and fair electoral process in Burkina Faso**.

WANEP-COTE D'IVOIRE

At the invitation of the Spanish Government, the National Network Coordinator (NNC) traveled to Spain in March 2007 to participate in a seminar organized to commemorate the **International Women's Day**. At the end of the seminar, a network of African and Spanish women was established to work together in promoting and advocating for Women's rights. Through its WIPNET program, WANEP Cote d'Ivoire carried out a community education project on the UN Security Council Resolution 1325 in 10 major towns in various regions of the country. Furthermore, in October training was conducted for 50 community women in Korhogo and Niakaramadougou situated in the North of Cote d'Ivoire, formerly held rebels town of the New Forces. The training provided the participants with appropriate skills for the peaceful management of conflicts and relevant information on HIV/AIDS prevention. Similar training was held for 22 rural women in peaceful conflict resolution and the campaign against HIV/AIDS. In November, a training workshop was conducted in partnership with USIP (United States Institute of Peace) for 37 CSOs from various provinces across the country

WANEP Cote d'Ivoire witnessed the ceremony of the **Flame of Peace** in Bouaké to burn a stockpile of arms and ammunitions as a symbolic gesture of the end of the civil war. The event brought together the president, **Laurent Gbagbo**, Prime Minister, **Guillaume Soro** and many other African heads of states and dignitaries from the UN, AU, ECOWAS and other international organizations. Furthermore, the national secretariat established new partnership with **Pax Christi** and the West Africa Action Network on Small Arms (WAANSA). In partnership with CERAP, an international colloquium under the theme: **"Religion as a Tool for Peace"** was held in October.

WANEP-THE GAMBIA

At the invitation of the US Embassy in the Gambia, the NNC participated in a two-week Senior Leaders Seminar organized by the African Centre for Strategic Studies in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. The seminar brought together top cadres from the military, police, government, academia, research institutions and civil society organizations. Prominent among the issues discussed was civil-military relationship. Under its governance program, WANEP-The Gambia led a coalition of CSOs in The Gambia to observe the parliamentary elections. For the first time in the history of the country a total number of 120 national election observers took part in the electoral process. Within the framework of the Sub-Regional Program on Small Arms and Light Weapons (SRP-SALW), the national network initiated

community development projects in **Koina Ward** in exchange for arms voluntarily surrendered after an extensive sensitization campaigns undertaken over the past two years. Skills center, milling and grinding machines and a community pump for the provision of clean water were provided to the community. The arms collected were destroyed in a ceremony attended by top government officials and authorities from the security forces.

WANEP GHANA

In March, the national secretariat conducted training for members of the network on tools of conflict analyses and transformation to enhance their peace building skills and strengthen their capacity to mitigate conflicts in their respective regions. Besides, the leadership of the **Bole District Assembly** in the Northern region was trained on tools



Cote d'Ivoire: Training participants in group photo – Lataha/Korhogo

of conflict analysis and resource-based conflict management to improve their technical know-how in transforming resource-based conflicts. Furthermore, a review meeting was held in Kumasi with Muslim leaders as a follow-up to a non-violence and peace building seminar



Ghana: Bombande leading the facilitation of dialogue.

held in 2006 to enhance the capacity of the Kumasi Muslim community leadership on dialogue to engage in various conflict issues in their communities. Under its Early Warning and Early Response program, sixteen (16) civil society organizations based in the Northern region of Ghana were trained with the view to enlarge its number of monitors. A cross-section of prominent women in the **Dagbong** traditional area was trained in peace education, conflict surveillance and resolution as a follow-up to a meeting held with the women in February 2007 to review activities and share experiences. In the course of the year meetings were held with a large number of the women in **Tamale and Yendi**.

WANEP-GUINEA

With support from Oxfam GB under the auspices of SIDA funds, WANEP-Guinea organized strategic planning meeting and Training of Trainers (TOT) workshop in peacebuilding for 20 women from 13 women groups in Guinea – Conakry in February. The training was undertaken within the framework of the implementation process of a three year project for MRU countries aimed at strengthening and deepening the WIPNET program in Liberia and Sierra Leone, as well as expanding it to Guinea. With support from the regional secretariat, a strategic plan was developed and new National Network Coordinator was recruited during the first quarter of 2007. WANEP-Guinea entered into an agreement with the Government of Guinea through the Ministries of Internal Affairs and Territorial Administration to lead peace building processes countrywide. In December 2007, training on advanced mediation, negotiation, strategic advocacy and non-violence was organized in Conakry for a total of 19 women from the three MRU countries. The purpose of the training was to enhance the capacities of selected women leaders to successfully intervene in conflicts with the potential to escalate within and across the MRU. Under the leadership of the national secretariat, a Justice Lens Committee made up of peace building, media and human rights representatives was launched to promote respect for human rights. The committee received national

recognition.

WANEP - GUINEE-BISSAU

Under its capacity building program, **WANEP GB** conducted training for the **National Movement** of Civil Society Groups in Peace, Democracy and Development. The training was aimed at raising awareness in reducing tensions following the political and social crises in January in which assassinations, rape and apprehension of political leaders were reported. Over the years, the WANEP-GB WIPNET program carried out mass-sensitization campaigns for the involvement of Bissau's women in peace building and decision-making processes. As a result of the sustained campaigns and training seminars, women's participation in the government has increased. Five women were appointed to leadership positions compared to two in the preceding government. Also, WANEP-GB was selected to participate in an international training of trainers in **Limbe, Cameroon** on revenue management and transparency in mining projects. Currently, the national network has attained a temporary Advisory Status to the Internal Administration Ministry of the country to promote stability in the country.

WANEP – LIBERIA

Under its Community Education Investment Program (CEIP), WANEP Liberia recruited and enrolled over 500 children into private and public schools. These children, formerly associated with fighting forces are now being re-inserted and re-integrated into society in Grand Gedeh, Lofa, and Sinoe counties. In addition, a border monitoring program was also established to protect them against cross-border recruitment and trafficking. On the other hand, the WIPNET program intervened to resolve a parliamentary conflict in Liberia involving the speaker of the house and some parliamentarians. The women of WIPNET succeeded in bringing the



Project review team interacts with members of the Children's Club (CC) at WANEP's field office in Foya, Lofa County

parties together at the Unity Conference Center in Virginia as mediators. The matter was settled though the speaker resigned few days later. **In the framework of the Civic Education project** entitled **"Strengthening Democracy in Liberia: Supporting Women's Political**

Participation through Civic Education, some equipments (TV set, generator, megaphone, stabilizer, DVD player, video deck) were distributed to the women of Gbarma in Gbarpolu county. The



WIPNET – TRC Community Sensitization and Awareness Luncheon in Cape Mount

women are expected to use the equipments to sensitize other women in their communities about their roles and responsibilities. WIPNET seized the opportunity to launch Gbarma as the headquarters town of the WIPNET program in Gbarpolu County. Furthermore, the national network **organized** sensitization and awareness raising programs on the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) in all of the 13 districts of Montserrado, Cape Mount, and Gbarpolu counties as part of a process to increase **community awareness through campaign for Women's Political Empowerment and Access to Justice**. The WIPNET program also conducted two workshops on the TRC to prepare survivors of sexual and gender based violence to testify their experiences to the TRC.

A national consultation with media experts and local radio executives was held in Monrovia, Liberia. The purpose was to better inform the WIPNET program on structuring the **Voices of Women** program for local programming geared towards promoting community participation. Through its *Voices of Women* radio program component, WIPNET established 3 rural women radio listening clubs in Kakata, Palala, and Ganta. Radio sets and batteries were provided to each of the clubs to facilitate listening to the programs. The project created the space for rural women to be heard on issues affecting their lives. In December 2007, in Monrovia, a training was organized for the program officers in charge of the Voices of Women radio programs in all three of the countries of the MRU. With the objective of promoting self-sufficiency among women, three community agricultural projects were undertaken by WIPNET in Margibi, Bong and Nimba Counties after a capacity building workshop involving 90 women – 30 from each of the three communities. Another two community agricultural projects were implemented in Palala, and Ganta.

WANEP - NIGERIA

The year 2007 marked the 5th anniversary of WANEP Nigeria. The achievements of the network and nation as whole will go down in the annals of the country. For the first time since independence in 1960,

Nigeria successfully handed over power from one civilian administration to another without military coup d'état. In the face of numerous challenges, WANEP Nigeria firmly established itself as a viable network of note and relevance in the role it played to facilitate the smooth transition. In addition to serving as the support base and entry point for international election observers, WANEP-Nigeria also produced the following Policy Briefs in relation to the elections:

- **Giant of Africa and the 2007 Elections: A transition in Crisis?**
- **April 2007 Polls: Preparedness, Stakes and Threats.**
- **2007 Nigeria Elections: Lessons Learned for Democratic Consolidation.**

Under its capacity building program, WANEP-Nigeria, organized a series of workshops in collaboration with various partners. The workshop on the prevention of electoral violence was organized in partnership with the United States Institute of Peace (USIP) under the theme, **“Nigeria 2007: Building Blocks for a Peaceful Transition,”** in Abuja, Nigeria. Thirty-one participants representing all six of Nigeria's geo-political zones attended the workshop. A national conference was organized in Abuja as part of the broader efforts towards establishing partnership with the government and private sector for effective disaster management in Nigeria under the theme **“Civil Society/Government Partnership for Disaster Reduction in Nigeria”**.

WANEP Nigeria in April also renewed its contract with Herinch Boll Foundation – a German charity organization to continue its program on Community Women in Peacebuilding Process in the Niger Delta. The NNC of WANEP Nigeria participated in a two-weeks training of civilian experts for deployment in international peace operations organized in Germany by the German



Left, Director General of the National Emergency Management Agency, Air Vice Marshal Audu-Bida (rtd), Director of Treasury & Finance - WANEP-Nigeria, Mrs. Naomi Akpan-Ita and National Network Coordinator, WANEP-Nigeria, Mr. Chukwuemeka B. Eze at the venue of the conference on Disaster Reduction

Center for International Peacekeeping Operations in collaboration with the UN Training Centre of the German Armed Forces, bringing together 25 international experts from different background. Under its **Research and Publication program**, WANEP Nigeria published a *Peacebuilding*

Training Manual for Community Women and a book entitled *Disaster Risk Reduction through Effective Coordination and Collaboration*. The activities of the WIPNET program for the past three years were evaluated by its major funder OXFAM Novib Netherlands and discussions were held on the future of the project for the next three years. NOVIB expressed satisfaction with the achievements of the WIPNET program and renewed its commitment to continue funding support. As part of its conflict prevention strategies, **the national secretariat** organized a national verification and validation meeting in Abuja as a follow-up to the risk assessment performed by the Network across the thirty six states of Nigeria including the Federal Capital Territory (FCT) in 2006. The activity was geared towards identifying areas or communities with potential threats or flashpoints of disasters and conflicts.

WANEP-SENEGAL

WANEP-Senegal organized a capacity building workshop for women leaders on policy making to enhance conflict resolution. Under the WIPNET program, with the financial support of UNIFEM, the national network widely disseminated Resolution 1325 of the United Nations, advocating for women's empowerment and involvement in conflict prevention and peace building processes. Resolution 1325 was translated into Pular a local dialect, in order to facilitate understanding of its content thereby encouraging mass participation of rural women in all ongoing interventions in the Casamance rebellion. In the celebration of the International Women's Day on March 8th, a region wide campaign was launched to promote the application of the resolution. A number of seminars and meetings were also conducted to increase women's participation in the peace process in Casamance. As a result of the impact of the WIPNET program, WANEP-Senegal is now part of the Regional Committee fighting against Gender-Based Violence (GBV).

WANEP - SIERRA LEONE

With financial support from the Catholic Relief Services-Sierra Leone, WANEP-Sierra Leone established an early warning mechanism in the border areas of neighboring Guinea and Liberia. Under the project, 200 local community members in the Kambia and Pujehun Districts were trained in monitoring early signs of imminent and cross-border conflicts. Under **the Voice of Women project, the WIPNET program conducted radio discussion programs with five community radio stations in Bo, Makeni, Kenema and Freetown.** During the period under review **a total of ten emissions were broadcasted in 2007.** In the run-up to 2007 Presidential and Parliamentary Elections, WANEP-SL and Hope-Sierra Leone jointly implemented a project entitled **"Clean**

Elections Campaign". The project aimed at critically addressing the issues of violence in an effort to ensure that the elections were conducted according to internationally accepted standards in safe environments. In the observation of the election, the Sierra Leone Action Network on Small Arms (SLANSA) collaborated with WANEP-SL and Media Foundation for West Africa MFWA to deploy over 80 international and local non violent election campaigners and observers across the country with a strong message of **"Ballot Not Bullet"**. The joint action was supported by IBIS West Africa through the Foundation for Security and Development in Africa (FOSDA). The **International Day of Peace** was marked with a press conference and a celebration with hundreds of school pupils at Zadet Preparatory School in Freetown.

WANEP-TOGO

WANEP-TOGO held its Annual General Meeting (AGM) with the election of a new team of Board of Directors and the review of the constitution and Internal Regulation. The national secretariat organized a series of trainings, seminars and meetings in the course of the year. In the build-up to the Parliamentary elections in June 2007, a workshop, officially opened on behalf of the Prime Minister by the Minister for Human Rights and Democracy, **Madam Celestine Akouavi Aidam**, was organized for 45 Youth Leaders representing eleven political parties in Togo in February 2007. Given the past bitter experience of the violence that erupted in the last elections leading to internal displacement, refugee situation and death of many civilians, the workshop examined critical themes around good governance, leadership and power, political reforms, conflict and the principles of non-violence, as well as ethnicity in the context of elections in Togo. Under the stewardship of WANEP-Togo, a coalition named CODEL (Coalition pour l'observation des Elections) was formed. Through this coalition, 500 international observers (out of whom 400 were Togolese) were trained and deployed. Under its Peace Education program, four workshops were organized simultaneously in November for various youth groups comprising of a total of 510 youths from trade union, various political parties (80 from Atakpamé, 80 from Kpalimé and 350 from Lomé). The program will continue in 2008.



At the opening of a workshop organised for Youth Leaders of all the political parties in Togo

WANEP/IFOR Partnerships: A bilateral meeting was held at WANEP regional secretariat from the 8th-12th January, 2007. WANEP is currently hosting the African Desk of IFOR's Women's Peacemakers Program (WPP).

Partnership Meeting with OXFAM GB: a team of Oxfam GB personnel was received from the 16th to 17th January 2007 to discuss important institutional issues and develop strategies to sustain the partnership. Afterwards, a regional partners meeting was held in Dakar in February with a follow-up meeting in Bamako, Mali in August.

Annual General Meeting (AGM): WANEP held its Regional Board meetings and an Annual General Meeting (AGM) from the 22nd to 24th January 2007. The 9th AGM reviewed the targets set in the WANEP 2006-2009 strategic plan, and appraised reports of its 2006 activities from national and regional secretariats. At the end of the AGM, a teambuilding workshop was held with the view to harmonize WANEP systems of operations and devise ways to enhance communication and coordination of peacebuilding work of WANEP national networks in West Africa.

Africa Alliance For Peacebuilding (AfAP): At a meeting held in February 2007 in Durban – South Africa, the three African Regional Initiators for the Global Partnership for the Prevention of Armed Conflicts (GPPAC), the African Centre for the Constructive Resolution of Disputes (ACCORD), The Nairobi Peace Initiative –Africa (NPI-Africa) and the West Africa Network for Peacebuilding (WANEP), agreed to create the **African Alliance for Peacebuilding (AfAP)**.

WANEP/ECOWAS Consultations: The executive director of WANEP paid a working visit to the Secretariat of the newly transformed ECOWAS Commission in Abuja on February 8-9, 2007. In March 2007, two rounds of consultations were organized by ECOWAS and WANEP for government and civil society focal points for peace and conflict monitoring in West Africa for Francophone and Anglophone in Dakar and Accra respectively. In April 2007, a high level consultation on the **“Operationalisation of the ECOWAS Early Warning System”** took place in Abidjan, Cote d'Ivoire in determining risk factors for ECOWARN indicators for Peace & Conflict Monitoring.

Conference on Promoting Human Security: In March 5-6, 2007, WANEP participated in a conference jointly organized by the Institute for Security Studies (ISS) and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) in Pretoria, South Africa.

Africa Human Security Initiative: The second phase of the Africa Human Security Initiative (AHSI) was launched at the offices of the

Institute for Security Studies (ISS) in Nairobi, Kenya in March 2007. The ASHI project creates a network of African non-governmental research organizations, of which WANEP is a member, that can collectively make a constructive contribution to the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM) of the New Economic Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) by measuring the performance and compliance of key African countries on the commitments made at OAU/AU Heads of State level to promote human security

Consultative Meeting with the University for Peace: From March 28 - 29, 2007, WANEP participated in a consultative meeting organized by the UPeace Africa Program in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. WANEP made a presentation on its experience on outreach and community mobilization for peace in Africa.

Consultations for Institutional Strengthening for WANEP National Networks: With technical support of the Management Systems International (MSI), a Washington-based organization with NGO development expertise, two workshops for all WANEP National Networks were organized in April within the framework of the Capable Partners Program (CAP) of USAID. These two sub-regional workshops were preceded with national seminars focused on Institutional Development Framework (IDF) in each of the 12 national networks.

Participation at the Institute for Local Government Studies: On 28th April, WANEP presented 2 papers at the Institute for Local Government Studies (ILGS) in Accra and Tamale. The first paper examined *Peace building Efforts in Northern Ghana: Lessons for Local Authorities* while the second paper reviewed *Civil Society Partnership with ECOWAS through WANEP*. The overall objective of the papers was to contribute to policy thinking within the context of governance and peace building in Ghana given that WANEP is part of the Research and Advocacy Organizations (RAO) in Ghana.

Civil Society Coalition and the Continental Conference on the Grand Debate: WANEP collaborated with the Institute for Democratic Governance (IDEG) within the framework of the Ghana Civil Society Coalition, to provide inputs into the Grand Debate of the African Union Summit in July 2007. Initially, WANEP was part of a team that met with Ghana's former Foreign Minister, **Nana Akuffo Addo** to discuss the role of civil society in the Summit.

Continental Civil Society Conference on the Proposed African Union Government: The theme of this Civil Society Conference held on **June 22 - 23** was *“Accelerating Africa's Integration and Development in the*

21st Century: Prospects and Challenges.” The conference, which brought together 150 participants from 30 countries throughout Africa and the Diaspora, focused on the key objective of creating a platform for civil society to promote a well-structured debate that will contribute to a people-driven African Union. See www.aumonitor.org

Practical Disarmament and Peacebuilding in West Africa: The United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs (UNREC) convened a meeting from the 25th to 26th June in Lome, Togo to validate a “Training of Trainers” curriculum on practical disarmament and peace building. WANEP was among a team of experts invited to facilitate the process. The meeting established a partnership between WANEP and UNREC, which will start cooperation on a project entitled “*Capacity Building on Practical Disarmament and Peacebuilding: Strengthening Grassroots and Civil Society Organizations in West Africa*” in the future.

High Panel Meeting on the Responsibility to Protect (R2P): WANEP in partnership with OXFAM GB and the AU Civil Society Coalition organized a **HIGH LEVEL PANEL DISCUSSION ON THE RESPONSIBILITY TO PROTECT (R2P)**’ on June 27th, 2007 in Accra, Ghana to raise awareness of international commitments concerning the Responsibility To Protect civilians in armed conflicts and its implementation throughout Africa. Recommendations were made to engage in discussions on how African leaders could transform the *Responsibility to Protect (R2P)* principle to a legal instrument in order to mobilize national, regional and international resources to respond efficiently to ongoing conflicts on the continent.

The Interface between Peace and International Justice in Africa: WANEP participated in a high level conference convened on June 22-23 by the Africa Legal Aid (AFLA) in cooperation with the International Criminal Court (ICC) and the African Union (AU) on the interface between peace and international justice.

NGOs Forum on Promoting Women's Rights in Africa: WANEP and the IFOR/WPP DESK participated in a forum entitled “*Promoting Women's Rights in Africa: Implications for the Africa Union*”. The forum was organized by Network for Women's Rights (NETRIGHT) in collaboration with Ghana Rights-based NGOs on 22 June 2007 in Accra, Ghana.

Post Conflict Reconstruction and Development: From 17-19 July, 2007, WANEP Regional secretariat made a presentation on “*Coordination and coherence in the Post-conflict Environment: CSOs at National, Regional and Continental Levels*” at a conference

under the theme *Post Conflict Reconstruction and Development* held in Lusaka, Zambia under the auspices of the African Union (AU).

Human Security, Sustainable Justice, Peace and Reconciliation: WANEP taught a course on “Human Security, Sustainable Justice, Peace and Reconciliation” at a joint Peacebuilding Institute organized by the Nairobi Peace Initiative (NPI-Africa) and CORAT Africa in Bukavu, DRC from July 21-27, 2007 for 30 professionals.

Government of Holland Experts Meeting: WANEP honored an invitation by the Dutch Foreign Ministry to participate in an Experts Meeting on *Visions and Experiences of Southern CSOs Contributions to Improving the Aid Architecture* held in The Hague from the 22-23 October. Key CSOs from the South and officials from the Dutch Foreign Ministry deliberated on important topical issues related to aid effectiveness. WANEP presented a paper on the *Expected and Perceived Role of Donors*.

Africa Regional Meeting on the Geneva Declaration of Non-violence: WANEP participated at the Africa Regional Meeting of Governments and Civil Society Organisations on the Geneva Declaration on non-violence.

Research and Advocacy Organizations (RAO) Convention

The Regional Secretariat participated in the third RAO Convention. The two-day meeting was arranged to examine the NGO/Trust draft bill prepared by the Government of Ghana.

Conflict Transformation Collaboration: From the 25th to the 29th November, WANEP took part in a meeting of peace building practitioners from across the world in Geneva. The meeting was convened by the UN and the East West Institute.

Oxfam Financial Workshop: WANEP participated in a workshop organized by Oxfam GB in Dakar, Senegal on November 5-6, 2007. 37 participants representing Oxfam GB key implementing partners in West Africa attached to the Regional Conflict Prevention Programme took part in the workshop. The main objective was to strengthen Oxfam GB partners' capacity on financial management of programmes and the elaboration of narrative and financial reports.

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Burkina Faso
Nigeria
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We acknowledge in a very special way the contributions of our Partners and Donors in support of building peace and justice in West Africa

- Community House Church
- CORDAID
- CRS / WARO - USAID
- G-RAP
- Mennonite Missions Network
- Oxfam -GB
- Oxfam - USA
- The Dutch Government
- Urgent Action Fund
- Finland Ministry of Foreign Affairs
- IBIS
- GPPAC
- GTZ
- UNIFEM
- UNDP
- UNICEF
- NOVIB

UPCOMING EVENTS

A DECADE OF PEACEBUILDING: 1998 - 2008

10th Anniversary Celebrations:

- *Symposium*
- *Peace Quotes*
- *Peace March*
- *Football Matches*
- *Lectures*
- *Photo Exhibition*

In Memory of Our Dear Colleague Célestin Ousmane OUATTARA



At the dawn of the New Year, WANEP has lost a member of staff. On the 1st of January 2008, our colleague OUATTARA Ousmane Célestin, Zonal Coordinator of Zone II as well as the interim National Coordinator of WANEP Burkina Faso met his untimely death.

This sad news spread like wild fire amongst the various national networks, his friends and colleagues. At this year's WANEP annual retreat in Agona-Swedru in the Central Region of Ghana, your colleagues took a moment to think about you and pray for your departed soul.

The untimely death of OUATTARA Ousmane Célestin is an irreparable loss to his family and the WANEP family. As a peace builder, OUATTARA Ousmane Célestin truly demonstrated in his way of life that he had the intrinsic values of peace, humility, willingness to learn and love for others.

Today, you are no longer with us. You have gone ahead of us to the hereafter. Meanwhile, you have left a huge vacuum at WANEP and within the civil society in Burkina Faso that nobody can fill. By working for conflict prevention and early warning in zone II, you have immortalized your being. Your contribution towards stability in zone II is highly acknowledged.

We, your colleagues and friends, would never forget you, your wife and two children you left behind. We renewed our heartfelt condolences. You will ever live in our memory.

May the peace that you embodied and which you had worked for so tirelessly accompany you in your final abode.

May your soul rest in perfect peace

Your colleagues of WANEP.

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