

PROMOTING AGENDA 1325 AND GENDER EQUALITY IN WEST AFRICA

In November 2001, WANEP established Women in Peacebuilding Network (WIPNET) to enhance the capacity and roles of women in peacebuilding and post conflict reconstruction in West Africa, support the Gender component of the ECOWAS and African Union peace and security architecture and the implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 1325. Since its establishment and especially in the last six years through the support from ADA and other members of the WANEP Joint Financing Arrangement, WANEP has been providing training in dialogue and mediation, skills acquisition, decision making, leadership skills and political participation to over 3,000 women at community, national and regional levels across West Africa. Thus, making WIPNET the largest Women Peace and Security Network in Africa.

Through the support of ADA and other partners, WANEP has been supporting the development and implementation of National Action Plans (NAPs) for UNSCR 1325 at the regional and national levels and published a guideline, which provides the practical guide for NAPs development across the region. Through this approach, WANEP provided support to 12 of the 15 ECOWAS member countries to develop their NAPs and is currently facilitating the review of NAPs in countries such as Ghana and Sierra Leone whose NAPs have expired. WANEP is also supporting the development of database and capacitation of African Union's Female Mediators under the guise of FEMWISE and creating synergy between the continental and Regional Initiatives



(Left) Executive Director WANEP Dr. Eze presenting a paper on Status of UNSCR 1325 in West Africa: Women in Dialogue and Mediation. (Right) Regional Experience Sharing Conference to mark 15th Anniversary of UNSCR 1325, (L-R): WANEP Executive Director, Dr. Chukwuemeka Eze, ECOWAS Gender Director, Dr. Sintiki Ugbe, Ghana Deputy Minister Gender, Hon John Ackon, Commandant KAIPTC, Major-General O. B. Akwa and Mrs. Levinia Addae-Mensah, Programs Director, WANEP

As part of strategies to respond to the gender dynamics of violent extremism under the WANEP/ADA partnership in 2017, WANEP conducted a research entitled **“Current Dynamics and challenges of violent extremism in West Africa”**. The research sought to interrogate the gender dynamics and dimensions of violent extremisms with a view to contribute to ongoing efforts in countering violent extremism. This is in line with WANEP’s policy on engendering peace practice and applying the United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 and 2242. The findings of the research will inform WANEP’s proposals and support to ECOWAS and AU Counter Terrorism Strategy as well as contribute to the literature on the role of women in countering violent extremism in West Africa.