



WEST AFRICA NETWORK FOR PEACEBUILDING

Progress Report
JANUARY- MARCH 2023

OVERVIEW OF QUARTER ONE (Q1) PROGRAMME ACTIVITIES

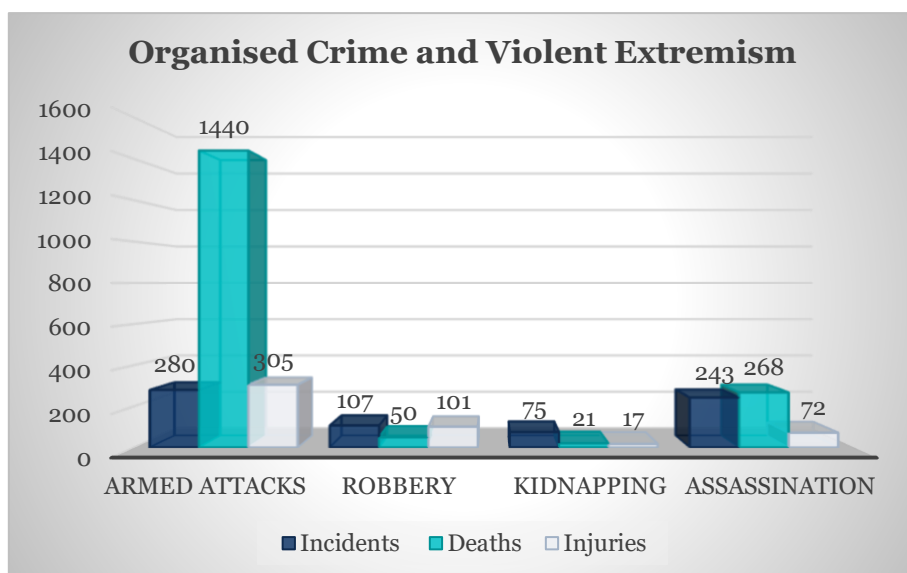
PEACE AND SECURITY OVERVIEW OF WEST AFRICA

The West Africa region continues to be confronted with human security challenges that affect stability, peace and security in many countries across the ECOWAS Member States. In the quarter under review, WANEP's 550 community monitors across the region reported **2006** human security-related incidents. These incidents led to **2768** deaths, injuries to **2882** people and property damage.

Organised Crime and Violent Extremism

Transnational criminal and armed groups remain active in the region despite efforts by State authorities to curb their activities. In the first quarter of 2023, **280** terrorist-related armed attacks were recorded across West Africa. The incidents led to **1440** deaths, injuries to **305** people and property damage.

Concerning armed robbery incidents, **107** cases were reported across the region. These incidents resulted in **50** fatalities and **101** injuries to people.



it is also important to underscore that abduction/kidnapping for ransoms continues to threaten the safety and security of citizens in the region. Over **75** abduction incidents were recorded in many countries across West Africa¹.

323 people were abducted/kidnapped, **21** were killed and **17** people were injured.

Additionally, **243** assassination/homicide

incidents were reported across West Africa., and these incidents culminated in **268** deaths and injuries to **72** people.

Incidents of illicit drug trafficking and smuggling of contaminated and expired goods were recorded in Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, Senegal, Liberia, Nigeria, Niger, Benin, Guinea, Sierra Leone and The Gambia. Over **10,687.85 kg** of marijuana, as well as 205 kg of cocaine, were seized by security forces and other law enforcement agencies in West Africa. In addition, many tons of expired frozen meats as well as many quantities of other illicit drugs² were seized by security personnel.

Women, Peace, and Security

Incidents of Sexual and Gender-Based Violence (SGBV)³. Over **31** rape incidents were reported across the region. These incidents led to **1** death and injuries to **20** people.

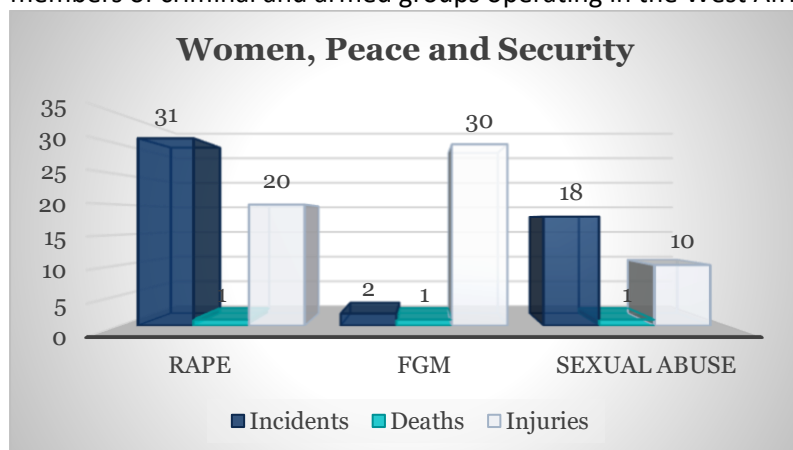
In terms of Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), **2** cases, **1** death and injuries to **30** people were recorded. Additionally, **18** cases of sexual abuse of children (boys and girls) were reported. These incidents

¹ The majority of the abduction incidents occurred in Nigeria, Niger, Mali, Togo, Benin, Guinea, Ghana and Liberia

² They include among others tramadol, Ecstasy, Kush, Skunk, and Hashish

³ The majority of the SGBV incidents were recorded in Cote d'Ivoire, Liberia, Ghana, Guinea, the Gambia, Senegal, Sierra Leone and Togo

resulted in **1** death and **10** injured. Furthermore, **86** women and girls were abducted for ransom by members of criminal and armed groups operating in the West Africa Sahel region.



Democracy and Governance

The governance and democratic landscape in West Africa was largely dominated by elections in Benin and Nigeria. Benin elected 109 members of the National Assembly during the January 2023 parliamentary election. Generally, the election was deemed relatively peaceful. The voter turnout was 37% and the ruling coalition, Progressive Union for Renewal and Republican Bloc won 81 of the 109 seats of the National Assembly.

In like manner, Nigerians went to the polls on 25 February to elect their new president. Mr Bola Ahmed Tinubu of the All Progressives Congress (APC) party was declared the winner⁴ despite opposition political parties’ contestations of the results announced by the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC).

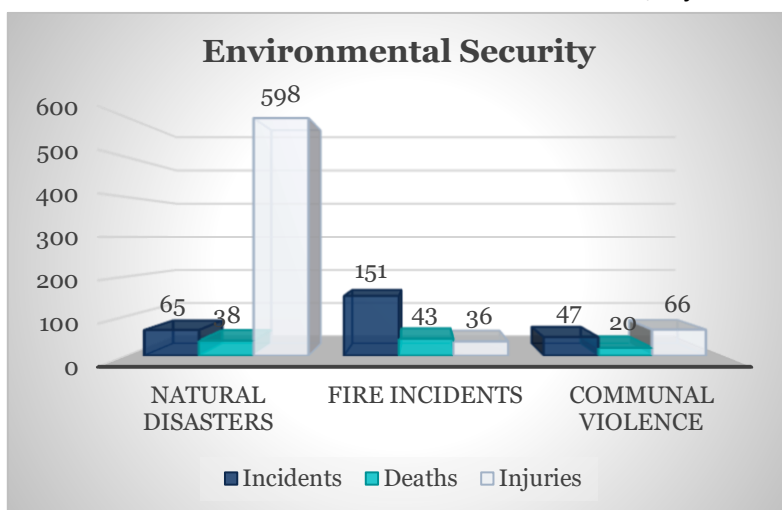
It is important to underscore that **273** demonstrations and protests that occurred in the region led to **38** deaths, injuries to 147 people and property damage.

Environmental security

In the quarter under review, natural and anthropogenic disasters, such as landslides, rainstorms/thunderstorms, tremors, flooding and water pollution were reported across West Africa. About **65** incidents of such nature were recorded resulting in **38** fatalities and injuries to **598** people.

⁴ Following this, four presidential candidates filed legal challenges on 21 March against Mr Tinubu's victory, alleging widespread rigging and manipulation of tallies. Furthermore, governance-related demonstrations and protests were recorded in the quarter under review in West Africa.

151 fire incidents caused by arson, gas explosion, wildfire and electrical malfunctioning were recorded. These incidents resulted in 43 deaths, injuries to 36 others and property damage. There



were also disease outbreaks. Cases of measles, Lassa fever and meningitis were recorded in Ghana, Liberia and Togo. In Liberia for instance, there were 8 reported deaths of Lassa fever and 21 contaminations. In Togo, 11 people were confirmed dead from meningitis and with more than 120 confirmed cases in the Oti region.

47 incidents of communal violence such as farmer-herder conflicts, chieftaincy tussles, and land conflicts resulted in 20 deaths and injuries to 66 people.

REGIONAL AND NATIONAL HIGHLIGHTS

1. TO ENHANCE THE USE OF EARLY WARNING IN SUPPORT OF RESPONSE INITIATIVES

1.1 Leveraging on its expertise from the Election Monitoring, Analysis, and Mitigation (EMAM) project, **WANEP Regional** provided technical support for the efficient monitoring of the parliamentary election in Benin. Within that context, an Election Situation Room (ESR) was held in Benin from 7 to 9 January 2023, with 714 observers deployed in all the 77 communes of the country.

1.2 WANEP Côte d'Ivoire as part of the project "Investigating Spillover Risks in West Africa: Political and Security Watch in Sahelian and Coastal States⁵", hosted a training course for 24 monitors (of whom 6 were women). The monitors were also provided with smartphones to help with data collection on incidents and on reporting.

1.2 WANEP continued to play a significant role in conflict prevention and early warning at a strategic level by providing valuable insights through its early warning publications. As part of this effort, WANEP's 2023 Annual Peace and Security Outlook has been shared with key partners and stakeholders, such as the African Union (AU) Commission, the German Agency for International Cooperation (GIZ), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), and the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) Liaison office at the AU. Moreover, the WANEP-AU Liaison Coordinator has briefed the Director of the Conflict Management Directorate on the Annual Peace and Security Outlook and the key recommendations presented in the report to assist the AU in responding to identified threats.

1.3 On 18 January 2023, **WANEP Guinea Bissau** met with the Director of the National Coordination Centre for Early Warning and Response Mechanisms to enhance the collaboration between the two institutions and to ensure the successful deployment of an early warning system in Guinea-Bissau. Discussions centred on the importance of formalising the collaboration between the two institutions to attain the intended goal.

⁵ The project was launched in Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire from 7 to 9 February 2023 and is supported by Interpeace.

1.4 On 31 January 2023, **WANEP Guinea Bissau** met with the Minister of Defence as part of efforts to streamline efforts by institutions working in peacebuilding and early warning, as well as to support the Executive arm of the Government and other relevant authorities in data collection, monitoring, and reporting for political stability and democratic resilience in Guinea Bissau.

1.5 As part of the project titled: “Women for Water and Peace Project (W4WP)”, supported by the United Nations Peacebuilding Fund,

- **WANEP Sierra Leone** conducted a workshop for 25 enumerators (13 of whom were women) on how to collect data on water management-related conflict in five (05) communities in Sierra Leone's western region.
- **WANEP Sierra Leone** in collaboration with International Labour Organisation (ILO) and other implementing partners celebrated IWD by engaging five communities⁶ in the western region. A total of 500 participants (79 men and 421 women) had their knowledge enhanced on conflict prevention, GBV and the promotion of social cohesion.

1.6 Ahead of the 2023 general election in Sierra Leone,

- **WANEP Sierra Leone**, in collaboration with UNDP, conducted a training (from 6 to 10 March 2023) for members of the National Elections Response Group (NERG) on Dialogue and Mediation. It is expected that participants would be able to respond effectively to threats that could mar the peaceful conduct of the June 2023 election.
- **WANEP Sierra Leone** conducted a training (from 13 to 16 March 2023) for 80 monitors (44 men and 36 women) on data gathering to enhance early warning and response during the 2023 electioneering period.
- **WANEP Sierra Leone** conducted a training session for 40 Insider Mediators on conflict analysis, mediation and dialogue.

1.7 From 14 to 15 February 2023, **WANEP Guinea**, in partnership with International Republican Institute (IRI) and Friedrich Ebert Stiftung (FES), provided a refresher training to 10 community monitors (including 6 women) to improve timely and quality data collection of its early warning system.

1.8 **WANEP Niger** organised a training session for 32 monitors (including 11 young women) in Niger from 14 to 15 March 2023 to effectively monitor political developments in the Sahel and coastal countries as part of the project titled “Investigating Spillover Risks in West Africa: Political and Security Watch in Sahelian and Coastal States”.

1.9 On 10 January 2023, **WANEP Togo** held a press conference to mobilise stakeholders, including the media with the view to contributing to reducing the risks of violence as revealed by the analysis of incidents recorded in its National Early Warning System (NEWS-Togo).

1.10 **WANEP Mali** organised two (02) training workshops for 25 community monitors of Mali under the project titled: “Investigating Spillover Risks in West Africa: Political and Security Watch in Sahelian and Coastal States”, “. The monitors, drawn from the project target areas were trained in data collection and reporting. The session also provided an interactive platform to enhance their understanding of the methodology of the implementation of the project as well as their roles and responsibilities.

⁶ The communities are as follows: Dwazark, Lumley, Aberdeen, Rokupark and Mayeinkieneh.

2. TO STRENGTHEN WOMEN AND GIRLS' CAPACITY FOR POLICY INFLUENCING

2.1. International Women's Day 2023: WANEP joined the global community to commemorate the 2023 International Women's Day (IWD)⁷ with a series of activities in the reporting period as follows:

2.1.1. Interactive Session with Women and Youth Groups: The Women Peace and Security (WPS) unit of WANEP organised an interactive session with women and youth groups themed: "Achieving Gender Parity through the Utilisation of Digital Technology." The session brought together 25 participants drawn from women and youth networks including women organisations, faith-based and community-based organisations. The highly interactive meeting garnered wide publicity while participants developed a set of action-oriented recommendations on how women can explore the potentials of digital technology to advance gender parity and increase their meaningful and inclusive participation in leadership. Key recommendations included the following: i) the need to link digital strategies to the National Action Plans (NAPs), ii) the need to work in partnership with ministries of communication to mark cybersecurity month and iii) collaboration with cybersecurity authorities to raise awareness of innovative digital technology among others.

2.1.2. Sensitisation/Awareness Campaigns: Several sensitisation and awareness activities were carried out as part of activities marking the 2023 IWD. Video messages that featured WANEP female National Network Coordinators were produced and widely distributed on all WANEP's social media accounts. Additionally, Images of male employees striking the #EmbraceEquity hashtag were also circulated. Goodwill messages from all regional office personnel were displayed on an IWD wall.

2.1.3. GenderTalk Series (GTS) #10: The 2023 IWD celebrations culminated in the 10th edition of the GTS which was dedicated to exploring the role of digital technology in the advancement of the WPS agenda under the theme: *Maximising technology for bridging the gender divide*. The edition featured speakers with proven expertise and experience in gender and technology who shared practical experiences on how technology can be used to achieve gender parity and advance women's economic empowerment and productivity. A key aspect of the discussion centred on the importance of protecting women's and girls' rights in the digital space in the face of increasing cyberbullying and ICT-facilitated gender-based violence (GBV). The edition was attended by 35 participants⁸ from across the region including gender activists, technologists, and innovators.

2.1.4. National GenderTalks: In line with the localisation of the GenderTalks Series, the third edition of the national GTS was led by the national network offices of The Gambia, Sierra Leone and Liberia on the theme⁹: "Leveraging the Relevance of Social Media and Technology in the Advancement of the WPS Agenda (Opportunities and Gaps)." Three speakers with backgrounds in ICT, gender, women, peace and security representing the three countries shared their rich experiences and interventions leveraging the benefits of technology for advancing the women, peace and technology agenda.

2.2. Employing gender-informed peacebuilding and conflict prevention interventions at all levels

2.2.1. Visit to the Domestic Violence and Victim Support Unit (DOVVSU) Centre: On 14 February 2023, the Working Group on Women, Youth, Peace, and Security in Ghana (WGWYPS-GH) paid a working visit to the Domestic Violence and Victim Support Unit (DOVVSU) of the Ghana Police. The

⁷ The IWD presents a viable opportunity of ensuring that women's key issues and concerns remain visible in the public domain. The theme for 2023 IWD was 'DigitALL: Innovation and technology for gender equality, with the hashtag #EmbraceEquity! This theme is based on the United Nations 67th Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) priority theme 'Innovation and technological change, and education in the digital age for achieving gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls.'

⁸ Participants brainstormed on why technology is relevant to women's empowerment and their role in improving women's access to digital tools.

⁹ This theme was premised on the critical role technology and social media continue to play in conflict and post-conflict societies, where the digital gender divide is widely used as a tool for wider social inequalities, GBV and promulgation of social bullying.

visit was to acquaint the Group with the services of the facility and also to discuss potential areas of collaboration between DOVVSU and the WGWYPS-GH. Specifically, the visit was part of collaborative efforts of civil society to partner with the Centre, particularly in advocating for the elimination of Sexual and Gender-based Violence (SGBV) across the country.

2.2.2. Addressing Gender-Based Violence (GBV): WANEP, in its capacity as the convener of the Working Group on Women, Youth, Peace and Security – Ghana Chapter (WGWYPS-GH), held a webinar¹⁰ aimed at addressing gender-based issues in Ghana and proffering actionable strategies for mitigating the scourge. The webinar was a key outcome of the Group’s courtesy visit to the DOVVSU centre, where the need for close collaboration of the Centre with Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) was identified as part of efforts to ensure that women’s security concerns continue to be in the limelight. The webinar also provided an opportunity to enlighten participants on the state of GBV in Ghana and the spirited efforts of relevant stakeholders to address the worrisome situation.

2.3 WANEP Guinea Bissau and its partners organised an awareness-raising session as part of activities commemorating National Women's Day¹¹ (30-31 January 2023) in Guinea Bissau under the theme "Gender Equality in a Global and Digitalised World". The objective of the meeting was to sensitise women and girls on their role in innovation, leadership and management of new technologies. The event was attended by more than 100 participants, most of whom were women.

2.4 In commemoration of IWD, **WANEP Guinea Bissau** was invited to make presentations on various themes centred around the role of women in the democratic and peacebuilding processes in Guinea. The event aimed to contribute to reflection and dialogue on the role of women's participation in democratic and peacebuilding processes in the country.

2.5 As part of activities commemorating IWD, **WANEP Sierra Leone** organised a radio programme to enhance the awareness of communities on the role of women in promoting peace, security, social cohesion and national development in the country.

2.6. In commemoration of IWD, **WANEP Togo** organised a sensitisation workshop on 18 March 2023 with 25 women and 04 men in Mango (Oti Prefecture) on the use of digital technology for income-generating activities.

2.7 On 10 March 2023, **WANEP Mali** organised an information and awareness campaign around the theme “Inclusive Governance of the Security Sector: Optimising Women’s Participation in Consultative Security Advisory Committees, as part of activities commemorating IWD. 162 people (of whom 144 were women) were reached and are expected to facilitate greater involvement of women in the committees in their municipalities.

2.8 WANEP Guinea and UNICEF co-hosted an exchange meeting with women's organisations and young female leaders on the occasion of IWD. Discussions focused on the positive aspects of digital technology in the empowerment of women. 30 participants took part in the workshop.

2.9 WANEP Burkina Faso facilitated a session on the theme “Protecting the rights of women and girls on social media” during a panel discussion organised by UNDP on 13 March 2023. The event was part of activities commemorating IWD and saw the participation of 150 people.

¹⁰ The guest speaker for the webinar was ACP Owusuwaa Kyeremeh, Director of the Domestic Violence and Victim Support Unit (DOVVSU) of the Ghana Police Service.

¹¹ To commemorate the death of Titina Ernestina Silá, a freedom fighter for the liberation of Guinea Bissau from Portuguese colonialism.

2.10 On 29 March 2023, **WANEP's** Women in Peacebuilding Network (WIPNET¹²) in **Liberia** and Medica Mondiale met with opposition Montserrado County Electoral District #10 Representative Yekeh Kolubah to calm Voter Registration violence between supporters of the Representative and supporters of the Congress for Democratic Change (CDC) political party. The meeting contributed to preventing violence from escalating in District #10 of Liberia.

2.11 WANEP Sierra Leone and other stakeholders were selected to serve on the Steering committee set up to work on the development of the National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security in Sierra Leone.

2.12 WANEP Guinea, in collaboration with the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)¹³ supported the Government's efforts to increase women's and girls' participation in peace and human security. Specifically, the two institutions provided technical support for a training hosted by the Ministry of Women's Promotion, Children and Vulnerable Persons in building the capacities of women and girls on the concepts of early warning, peace education and advocacy.

2.13 WANEP Niger provided a capacity-building training in communication and peaceful coexistence for internal security agents, community leaders as well as women and youth in Tillabéry, Tahoua and Dosso. Twenty-five (25) participants, including 10 women, benefited from the training.

2.14 WANEP Niger, with support from UNDP, carried out community awareness campaigns, particularly among youth and women in the regions of Tillabéri, Dosso and Tahoua as part of efforts to contribute to peace in the regions.

2.15 As part of the Just Future project, **WANEP Niger** held an advocacy event in Tillabéri aimed at improving the representation of women and youth in peace mediation and peacebuilding at all levels. The event was attended by 30 participants, of whom 15 were women.

2.16 Within the framework of phase 1 of the project titled "Economic Resilience against violent extremism" in Togo,

- members of the five target cooperatives¹⁴ received practical training on techniques for producing animal feed. The various training sessions were conducted in five localities of Togo in the month of January 2023. Hundred (100) participants (of whom 76 were women) benefitted from the training.
- members of the five target cooperatives received practical training on techniques for constructing and using improved chicken coops with multi-layered nesting boxes.
- From 22 to 23 February 2023, hundred (100) women and young people were trained on the importance of social cohesion and community resilience. The training sought to build their capacity and make them less vulnerable.

2.17 At the request of the Ministry of Women's Promotion, Child, and Family, **WANEP Mali** hosted an experience-sharing workshop with umbrella organisations of women's organisations. The meeting allowed participants to draw inspiration from WANEP's experience in implementing the UNSCR 1325.

¹² The WIPNET programme is a component of WPS mainly implemented at the national level to mobilise a critical mass of women and build their capacity to play key roles in peacebuilding and human security within their communities.

¹³ The action is part of the project "Support to Women's Participation for an Inclusive and Peaceful Transition in Guinea" funded by the Peacebuilding Fund (PBF)

¹⁴ Warkambou, Mogou, Toumonlogou, Sam-Naba and Papri.

3. TO BROADEN THE PEACE EDUCATION PROGRAMME AND SUPPORT YOUTH PARTICIPATION AND VOICE IN ISSUES OF GOVERNANCE, PEACE AND SECURITY

3.1 Supporting Youth Empowerment and Mentorship for Conflict Prevention and Social Transformation in West Africa: In the quarter under review, **WANEP** finalised the selection process for the 2023 cohort of its Youth Transformational Empowerment and Mentorship (Y-TEaM) Programme. Thirty (30) successful candidates (57 % of whom were women) from across West Africa have been selected. Core faculty members and mentors were equally identified alongside and taken through an orientation session to clarify expectations, roles and responsibilities. The first online training¹⁵ offered an opportunity for the mentees to share their perspectives on the current peace and security challenges and on how they can leverage the existing frameworks to enhance their contribution to peace and security in the region.

3.2 Promoting Youth Activism and Action for Peace through Evidence-based Research: **WANEP** provided technical support to a Fulbright Fellow, Ms Micaiah Palmer¹⁶ to conduct a research project on the following theme: “Transcending Silos: Multidimensional Approaches to Supporting Youth Activism in Ghana”¹⁷. Key recommendations¹⁸ from the research included the following i) youth activists are to pursue collaboration and intermediation with other youth in government with the support of neutral CSOs; ii) youth activists are encouraged to create anti-apathy campaigns to combat growing apathy and political indifference among youth and iii) create digital and in-person solidarity platforms to foster social and emotional well-being within the youth community.

3.3 Building Regional Solidarity among Youth on Peace and Security:

- **WANEP** held its quarterly exchange session with the Youth4Peace Networks across Member States to discuss key priority actions for 2023 and provide updates on actions already taken.
- In the lead-up to the 2023 elections in Nigeria, the Youth4Peace members across the region joined in solidarity with their Nigerian counterparts to hold a webinar on “The Role of the Youth in Nigeria’s 2023 Elections”. The webinar offered an opportunity to examine challenges to the 2023 presidential election in Nigeria and the contribution of the youth to the peaceful conduct of the election. Key recommendations from the webinar were summarised in a communiqué that was disseminated with the hope that stakeholders would act swiftly.
- During the quarter under review, **WANEP** facilitated the establishment of a new Youth4Peace Network in Senegal. The Youth4Peace Network aims to mobilise diverse youth actors in ECOWAS member States for coordinated action to support the effective implementation of the Youth, Peace and Security Agenda in the region.

3.4 Enhancing Youth Dialogue and Policy Influencing on Governance, Peace and Security: On 20 March 2023, **WANEP**’s Youth, Peace and Security desk organised its ‘Youth Perspectives Webinar’ to amplify young people’s voices on peace and security issues confronted by the region. The March edition focused on the theme: “Digital Technology in Electoral Violence Monitoring and Mitigation in

¹⁵ The training was held from 15 to 16 March 2023 and two topics were covered, namely, “Understanding the context of peace and security in West Africa” and ‘Mechanisms and frameworks for managing and preventing conflicts in West Africa’.

¹⁶ Ms Palmer, from the United States, joined **WANEP** in May 2022 as part of a Fellowship Programme.

¹⁷ The research paper specifically looked at the way youth social movements can become more effective for championing youths’ concerns and contributing to long-term peace, with Ghana as a case study.

¹⁸ The research paper equally stressed the need for governments to work with youth as co-creators and implementers for youth agendas, policies, programmes, and projects as well as the need to foster collaboration with academia and international partners to support youth-led research by making organisational data available to youth to strengthen data-based activism.

West Africa: Progress, Limitations and Prospects” and¹⁹ created an avenue for intergenerational dialogue to deepen reflection on understanding why election integrity in West Africa is still challenged despite the use of technology. One key recommendation that emerged from the discussions was the need for West African States and Electoral Management Bodies (EMBs) to learn from their past experiences and maximise the use of technology to build robust systems and trust in order to mitigate electoral protests and violence. About 70 participants, mostly young people, were in attendance.

3.5 Supporting ECOWAS in the Actualisation of the Youth, Peace and Security Agenda in West Africa: WANEP continues to provide support to ECOWAS in promoting youth contribution to peace and security in the region. Youth leadership and entrepreneurship are among the intervention strategies to build resilience to violence. From 28 to 30 March 2023, in Lomé, Togo, about 20 youth, from across West Africa who embarked on the “Inclusive Leadership and Entrepreneurship Boot Camp” in November 2022, completed with success the five-month training and coaching sessions. Beneficiaries are expected to cascade the knowledge gained with their peers once they return to their respective countries.

3.6 In the quarter under review, **WANEP Guinea Bissau** officially launched the "School of Peace Project". The objective of this project is to instil the value of peace into the daily life of Bissau-Guineans. The project also seeks to stimulate young people to respect themselves and others, to do good and develop their self-esteem.

3.7 On 25 February 2023, **WANEP Côte d'Ivoire** participated in a national conference as part of the "Jeunes de Valeur²⁰ (JVD)" project on democracy and good governance. The event was the first of a series of three national conferences and was attended by over 250 participants. The conference provided an opportunity for participants to discuss and exchange ideas with the youth. The National Network Coordinator (NNC) of WANEP Côte d'Ivoire spoke on the theme “Local development”. The Network also participated in the second national conference (with over 200 participants) held on 4 March 2023. The JVD project beneficiaries encouraged authorities who were present at the event to create a framework of peace and social cohesion, as well as to undertake initiatives for the political and professional integration of young people.

3.8 WANEP Côte d'Ivoire attended a Career Day at the University Institute of Abidjan (IUA) for students pursuing development courses. WANEP provided information on professional perspectives in the development sector during the event, which was themed "Professional Perspectives in the Field of Development." The Network also set up an exhibition stand focused on its Youth and Peace Education (YPE) programme and urged students to volunteer for the organisation.

3.9 In the month of January, **WANEP Senegal** continued its monitoring efforts to reduce violence during *Nawétane*²¹ matches. In the past, matches were generally associated with violence.

3.10 On 29 March 2023, **WANEP Senegal** participated in an experience-sharing workshop by the Women, Youth, Peace and Security Working Group in West Africa and the Sahel (WYPWG-SA) on new technologies and women's political empowerment. The session provided an opportunity for participants to share experiences in the use of technology to increase women's participation in areas such as politics and economics. WANEP Senegal also shared its experience of the youth project (Electoral Violence Monitoring, Analysis and Mitigation-Jeune (EMAM-J)) on monitoring dangerous

¹⁹ Five (5) panellists with various expertise and experience in election management processes shared their views on the topic and agreed that despite the limitation of technology in election management, it remains one of the effective tools to enhance accuracy and a more acceptable election result.

²⁰ In English: Youth of Value, a project funded by Friedrich Ebert Stiftung

²¹ They are local soccer championships in the districts.

discourse on social networks and electoral violence undertaken during the 2022 legislative elections in Senegal.

3.11 WANEP Liberia, with support from Catholic Relief Services (CRS), provided a three-day training on “Journey to Peaceful Masculinity” for 42 young people. Participants learned how to use positive masculinity attributes for peaceful coexistence within their homes and communities.

3.12 WANEP Sierra Leone, through its radio advocacy and awareness programming, engaged the youth on how they can contribute to national development. The youth also enhanced their knowledge of the negative effect of drug abuse and violence in communities.

3.13 18 young people (of whom 5 were women) from the Youth4Peace-Togo were trained in conflict prevention and management, mediation and advocacy techniques. The training, conducted by **WANEP Togo**, with funding support from USAID REWARD equipped the young people to contribute to the management of community conflicts.

3.14 WANEP Mali, in collaboration with the National Youth Council (CNJ) and *Réseau National de la Jeunesse du Mali*²²(RENAJEM), organised several advocacy sessions which contributed to the adoption of the National Youth Policy and its action plan for 2023-2027, by the Council of Ministers on 1 March 2023.

3.15 In the month of February 2023, **WANEP Burkina Faso**, with support from Eirene Sahel, provided orientation sessions for the incoming executive members of the peace clubs established in six (06) schools. A total of 85 participants, including 37 girls participated in the sessions. It is expected that the guidance provided will increase the visibility and impact of the peace clubs in the country.

4. TO EXPAND COMMUNITY RESILIENCE AND BUILD THE CAPACITY OF INSTITUTIONS TO PERFORM THEIR MANDATE EFFECTIVELY IN HUMAN SECURITY

4.1. As part of the *Fonds au Profit des Victimes*²³ (FPV) project, **WANEP Côte d'Ivoire**

- provided startup kits to 97 beneficiaries to aid them with the establishment of their livelihoods.
- convened a training and exchange workshop for community agents responsible for providing material and psychosocial support to the programme beneficiaries. key outcomes from the workshop included the following: (i) increase engagement with customary authorities and (ii) create security requirements for community agents to ensure they carry out their duties effectively.
- oversaw 16 community therapy sessions for 300 beneficiaries (184 of whom were women)
- facilitated the provision of material support to 11 beneficiaries to finance an income-generating activity of their choice.

4.2 As part of the Austrian Development Agency (ADA) funded project titled "Fight Against Cross-Border Cattle Rustling in the Senegal-Guinea-Bissau Border," **WANEP Senegal**

- visited sites identified for the establishment of community livestock enclosures in three regions²⁴ of Guinea Bissau,

²² In English: National Youth Network of Mali.

²³ In English: Trust Fund for Victims project and falls within the Economic/material rehabilitation of the beneficiaries of the project: "Relieving the victims of the 2011 crisis in Yopougon and Abobo to contribute to social cohesion: Grains of Peace"

²⁴ The sites identified are as follows: Camjanbary (region of Oio) Canhamina (region of Bafata) and Ingore (region of Cacheu)

- WANEP Senegal, WANEP Guinea-Bissau and their partners conducted an assessment of the first year of implementation of the project. It is expected that recommendations that emerged from the assessment will help to improve the implementation of the project.

4.3 As part of efforts to prevent violent extremism in Saraya, the south-eastern part of Senegal, **WANEP Senegal** with support from Friedrich Ebert Stiftung, spearheaded the following:

- a workshop to review and validate indicators for the monitoring of violent extremism (VE) in Saraya,
- a capacity-building workshop for the security forces of Saraya on the concept of community policing,
- and a capacity-building workshop for community monitors on VE-related data monitoring, collection and processing. The WANEP early warning system was introduced to the participants and the establishment of a local early warning system was formalised.

4.4 From 30 March to 1 April 2023, **WANEP Liberia**, with support from Catholic Relief Services (CRS) led a capacity-building session for 42 community citizens (disadvantaged youth, motorbike riders, and community leaders) on the “Journey to Peaceful Masculinity”. The engagement sought to enhance the capacity of participants in promoting gender-equitable participation in their homes, community, and the larger society, thereby sustaining peaceful coexistence among citizens.

4.5 In the quarter under review, **WANEP Sierra Leone** organised a series of radio programmes that contributed to enhancing the awareness of citizens on the role of the Network in promoting peace and Security in Sierra Leone and for a peaceful general election.

4.6 On 11 March 2023, **WANEP Sierra Leone** conducted a training session for media practitioners in reporting Transitional Justice issues in Sierra Leone. 25 (14 men and 11 women) practitioners benefitted from the training and are expected to develop stories around Transitional Justice issues based on recommendations from the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC).

4.7 From 27 to 28 February, **WANEP Niger** held a national reflection and exchange workshop for security actors on the protection of civilians in conflict zones. Thirty participants (including 10 women) took part in this event.

4.8 As part of the Just Future project,

- **WANEP Niger** organised a meeting from 11 to 12 March 2023, bringing together local CSOs, local officials and leaders from the most excluded communities of the country to support the establishment of community peacebuilding platforms.
- **WANEP Mali** organised a multi-stakeholder dialogue on 18 March 2023, with twenty-two (22) participants ²⁵focused on emerging security challenges in the country. The dialogue provided an opportunity for participants to have a common vision and develop a roadmap of priority challenges and actions that need to be undertaken to improve the security and polity situation.
- **WANEP Mali** held a strategic advocacy workshop with security sector officials on 31 March 2023 with the goal of ensuring the inclusion of marginalised and excluded groups in the establishment of community peacebuilding platforms.

²⁵ Participants include members of the defence and security forces (FDS), technical services, representatives of civil society, umbrella organisations of women and youth organisations, and community leaders.

4.9 From 27 to 28 February 2023, **WANEP Togo** organised a training workshop for 27 participants²⁶ of who are members of the regional committees for peace and security, the Youth4Peace-Togo and women community mediators in conflict prevention and management techniques as well as advocacy.

4.10 As part of the project titled "Setting up of Security Advisory Committees (SACs)", **WANEP Mali** organised awareness and training workshops for members of the Security Advisory Committee. The workshops brought together 250 participants, including women and young people, who were trained on community policing, the mandate, role, and responsibilities of members of the SACs, for them to effectively fulfil their mandate.

5. UTILISING RESEARCH CAPACITY TO SUPPORT POLICY ADVOCACY AND LEVERAGE PARTNERSHIPS

5.1. WANEP Sierra Leone and other CSOs and government institutions attended the inception meeting of the Mediation and Democratic Consolidation sub-committee of the Citizen's Platform for Political Tolerance. The Network was selected to serve as the lead coordinator for the sub-committee and to lead the process of developing a strategic document to guide the actions of the sub-committee.

5.2. On 23 February 2023. **WANEP Niger**, in partnership with the Institute for Security Studies (ISS), organised a workshop to discuss and disseminate findings of joint research on "Niger: women's views on insecurity in the Tillabéri region".

5.3 In the quarter under review, **WANEP Mali** organised workshops to present the results of a local security perception and diagnostic survey to the members of the SACs. The workshops provided a platform to share the survey results on community perception, local security diagnosis, and crime statistics, conducted in the targeted project municipalities. Furthermore, the workshops provided an opportunity for feedback and recommendations, which are expected to improve the quality of the overall report as well as the work of the members.

6. TO STRENGTHEN WANEP'S INSTITUTIONAL CAPACITY AND ITS MEMBER ORGANISATIONS TO DELIVER ON THEIR MANDATE

6.1 WANEP held its annual staff retreat from 23 to 25 January 2023 under the theme "Strengthening relationships for efficient delivery of WANEP's vision". The retreat provided an excellent opportunity not only for team building but also for strategic institutional strengthening and planning.

6.2 From 21-23 March 2023, **WANEP** held the 17th edition of its General Assembly (GA), the West African Peacebuilding Fellows (WAPeF)²⁷ Conference and Partners Forum²⁸ under the theme "A Retrospection on the State-Citizens Relations in West Africa: Implications for the Realisation of ECOWAS Vision 2050". The 2023 GA provided an opportunity for WANEP to take stock of its interventions over the previous two years, evaluate its strategies, and establish methods for further collaboration with constituencies and stakeholders. The Network's Regional Board appointed Mrs Florence Ihome as the new Regional Board Chair.

²⁶ Participants were from three regions of Togo (the Northern, Savannah and Maritime Regions).

²⁷ The WAPeF provides a platform for exceptional West African citizens who work within and beyond their countries of origin to discuss ways to leverage their skills and experience in support of WANEP, ECOWAS and its Member States, and other development partners in their interventions aimed at conflict management and transformation in Africa. WAPeF also aims to support research, teaching, publication, and practical field experience on themes of peace, conflict resolution, and African development, while also inspiring people to form relationships that promote a culture of tolerance and peace.

²⁸ WANEP's Partners Forum is designed to engage current and potential partners and exchange perspectives on the state of peace and security in the region and how WANEP is responding through its strategic plan.

6.3 WANEP Regional provided an orientation session to the newly confirmed National Network Coordinator (NNC) for WANEP Côte d'Ivoire, Jean-Marc Hovi, as part of his onboarding process. The session took place at the regional office from 27 to 30 March 2023 and provided an opportunity for the NNC to interact with the Regional Staff and department leads.

6.4 WANEP Côte d'Ivoire and **WANEP Benin** held their General Assembly Meeting on 18 March and 30 March 2023 respectively.

As part of their commitment to enhancing the capacity of their staff to deliver effectively,

6.5 WANEP Senegal organised a capacity-building session for its staff on gender and its related concepts. The course was interactive and allowed for a common understanding of the concepts.

6.5 WANEP Côte d'Ivoire organised a training session for its staff members, particularly Programme Leads on the use of ODOO software. It is expected that the knowledge acquired will enable them to improve their operations and increase productivity.

6.7 Staff from **WANEP Togo** and partners benefited from a capacity-building workshop on Project Cycle Management from 8 to 10 March 2023

7. COLLABORATIONS AND EFFECTIVE NETWORKING

7.1 WANEP, the Danish Refugee Council (DRC) and the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) as part of a consortium launched the REcAP project and Network on 2 February 2023 in Dakar, Senegal. The REcAP Network²⁹ is an initiative funded by the European Union and comprises experts in peacebuilding, conflict prevention and violent extremism in 18 countries in West Africa and the Lake Chad Basin and Europe. The main objective of REcAP is to strengthen the role of these experts at regional, national and community levels, and to enable more informed decision-making by policymakers.

In the quarter under review, the Project Steering Committee (PSC)³⁰ of REcAP met for the first time to review the budget and activities for the year 2023. Furthermore, a Scientific Committee (SC)³¹ was created in anticipation of Network participation.

7.2 The AU selected **WANEP** to serve on the 20-member Strategy Group (SG) of its Network of Think Tanks for Peace. (NETT4PEACE). The SG is in charge of leading the Think Tank's operationalisation to support AU peace and security operations. NETT4Peace³²

7.3 On the margins of the 36th Ordinary AU Summit, **WANEP** participated in a CSO engagement consultation on 17 February 2023, organised by Amani Africa, a pan-African policy research, training,

²⁹ REcAP will serve as an interactive platform for regional cooperation between existing expert networks, research centres, civil society, implementing partners, regional organisations and governments to foster research and scientific information generation and for mutual learning.

³⁰ The Project Steering Committee (PSC) is the highest decision-making structure for the REcAP project's implementation. It is made up of one (1) senior management staff member from WANEP, DRC, and SIPRI at the Director or Deputy Director level.

³¹ is established to provide quality scientific assurance and advice on research strategies, initiatives, and themes for seminars, conferences, and other planned activities per the REcAP project's respective outcome and output deliverables.

³² NETT4PEACE is an initiative of the AU Commission that was officially launched in February 2023 by the Commissioner of Political Affairs, Peace and Security (PAPS). It serves as a knowledge community to generate independent and evidence-based scholarship/research to support the AU in effectively addressing the peace and security challenges facing the continent to achieve the Africa we want, as evinced in Agenda 2063.

and consulting think tank. As one of the panellists, WANEP's Executive Director spoke on the topic "Peace and Security-Unconstitutional Change of Government, Transitional Justice."

7.4 The AU invited **WANEP** to share its experience on research methodology on the climate-security threats nexus at a forum in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia in March 2023.

7.5 **WANEP** provided technical support in the development of a Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism course package at the invitation of the Kofi Annan International Peacekeeping Training Centre (KA IPTC). The course package needed to be reviewed to meet the needs of the intended beneficiaries.

7.6 From 28 to 29 March 2023, **WANEP Guinea** participated in a workshop aimed at reviving the framework for dialogue and multistakeholder consultation on the prevention of land conflicts in Guinea, as part of the implementation of the partnership agreement between the Association for Cooperation and Research for Development (ACORD-Guinea) and the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat), with support from the Peace Building Fund (PBF).