QUARTER ONE (Q1) PROGRAMME ACTIVITIES

The report presents highlights of WANEP’s programmes and activities implemented across the region during the first quarter of 2024. In this period, activities undertaken were part of the organisation’s efforts to enhance effectiveness and efficiency in delivering results in line with its 2021-2025 Strategic Plan.

OVERVIEW OF PEACE AND SECURITY DYNAMICS IN WEST AFRICA

The peace and security landscape in West Africa continues to be challenged by political upheaval, rising social and communal tensions, economic downturn, organised crime, and violent extremism. Between January and March 2024, democratic governance in the region was characterised by political tensions following the November and December 2023 coup attempts in Sierra Leone and Guinea Bissau, respectively. Another key event was the presidential election in Senegal on 24th March 2024. The election was originally scheduled for 25th February 2024 but was postponed by President Macky Sall over concerns with the candidates list.

In addition, countries in the region continue to grapple with the fight against corruption and insecurity amid rising poverty and inequality. This has contributed to rising public discontent, protests, and demonstrations, particularly in Ghana, Sierra Leone, Guinea, Mali, Togo, Benin, and Senegal. Notably, the civic space came under pressure not just in countries under military rule, but across the region.

In the quarter under review, data from the WANEP National Early Warning System (NEWS) recorded 2,898 human security-related incidents that led to 3,658 fatalities. The monitoring report focused on four thematic areas: Organised Crime and Violent Extremism, Democracy and Governance, Gender, Peace and Security and Environmental Security.

Organised Crime and Violent Extremism

Incidents related to organised crime and violent extremism including terrorist and armed attacks, robbery, kidnapping and abduction, trafficking in persons and arms, illicit drug offences, and homicide were reported in the first quarter of 2024. A total of 1,219 incidents with 1,560 deaths and 581 injuries were recorded in the region.
According to data from NEWS, there were 486 armed attacks including robberies, gun violence and kidnapping reported in the region representing 39.8 per cent of incidents recorded predominantly in Nigeria, Liberia, Sierra Leone, Gambia, Togo, Benin, Cote d’Ivoire, and Ghana. Homicide recorded 244 cases representing 20 per cent, terrorist attacks recorded 151 incidents representing 12.3 per cent, and human trafficking recorded 121 cases representing 9.9 per cent. Countries most affected include Burkina Faso, Nigeria, Mali, Niger, Togo, Benin, and Cote d’Ivoire. In addition, there were reports of transnational organised crime activities including illicit drug trafficking and abuse were reported in the region. A total of 112 cases of illicit drug seizures by law enforcement agencies, representing 9.1 per cent of incidents reported in the region. Key among the illicit drugs seized were cannabis indica, and other locally mixed substances such as “Kush”\(^1\), particularly in Sierra Leone, Liberia, Guinea, and The Gambia; Tramaking and ‘Gaddafi’\(^2\) in Cote d’Ivoire and cocaine in Guinea Bissau, Capo Verde, and Nigeria. Furthermore, tons of fake and expired pharmaceutical products, especially tramadol were seized by security forces and other law enforcement agencies in West Africa. The rise in reported incidents of illicit drug trafficking and abuse could be attributed to the presence of local and foreign mafia gangs and criminal networks and exacerbated by perceived corruption in public spaces across the region. The proliferation of and easy access to illicit drugs threatens states’ stability, promotes violent crimes, and prolongs communal conflicts.

Democracy and Governance

In the first quarter of 2024, the democratic governance credential of Senegal was tested by the decision of former President Macky Sall to postpone the presidential election on 3\(^{rd}\) February 2024, in the wake of the campaign period. On 15\(^{th}\) February 2024, the country’s Constitutional Council restored the presidential electoral calendar consistent with the Constitution. The presidential election was organised on 24\(^{th}\) March 2024 with a total of 19 candidates on the ballot. In Senegal’s history, it was the first presidential election conducted without the incumbent contesting. The candidate of the opposition party, the African Patriots of Senegal for Work, Ethics and Fraternity (French: PASTEF), Bassirou Diomaye Faye was elected President with 54% of the valid votes cast. The outcome of the election and the peaceful political transition demonstrated the resilience of the people and the democratic structures in the country. Nevertheless, multiple violent incidents were recorded in the lead-up to the elections that led to the death of more than 15 people in Dakar and other cities across the country.\(^3\)

\(^{1}\) A mixture of cannabis indica/marijuana, marshmallow leaves, tramadol, formaldehyde, human bones (alleged) and precursor chemicals such as acetone, methanol etc. Popular in Sierra Leone, Liberia, Guinea and The Gambia.

\(^{2}\) The latest hype drug used by young people. A mixture of Tramaking and alcohol is spreading to the poorest neighbourhoods in Cote d’Ivoire.

In Sierra Leone and Guinea Biaasu, serving and former military personnel, members of the opposition party and ordinary citizens were arrested and detained in connection with the failed coup attempts in November and December 2023, respectively. For instance, in Sierra Leone, former President Ernest Koroma was charged with treason for his alleged role in a failed coup in November 2023. In February 2024, the court permitted former President Koroma to leave the country for medical attention in Nigeria which previously offered him a stay temporarily. Meanwhile, 27 people are on trial for multiple offences in connection with the alleged coup attempt.

There is continued regional and international pressure on the Transitional Government in Mali, Burkina Faso, Guinea, and Niger to develop tangible pathways for a peaceful democratic transition. However, the current political stalemate in the mediation efforts to return to democracy in the affected countries provides avenues for the military leaders to consolidate power and maintain their stay in office. This has the potential to wane public confidence and trust in transition processes and cast shadows on the credibility of the regional bloc in terms of its capacity to uphold democratic norms and security in the region.

Furthermore, countries in the region continue to experience inflations exacerbated by the rise in commodity prices including food, fuel, and agricultural products, following Russia’s war in Ukraine and the Israel-Hamas war. This is manifested in rising public discontent, protests, and demonstrations in the region. In the reporting period, a total of 296 demonstrations with 43 deaths and 264 injuries were recorded in the region.

Women, Peace, and Security
Incidents of Sexual and Gender-Based Violence (SGBV) were also prominent in the reporting period. According to data from WANEP NEWS, there were 256 rape incidents reported across the region. The incidents led to 12 deaths and over 200 injuries. Notably, these incidents occurred in the home/family settings as well as in educational institutions in countries in the region. Other incidents reported include Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) with 5 cases, 3 deaths and over 30 women and girls injured, especially in Sierra Leone and Liberia. Furthermore, 106 women and girls were kidnapped for ransom by criminal and armed groups operating in Nigeria and the Sahel region.

These types of systemic violence against women and girls have contributed to deepening already existing gender vulnerabilities and raised the need to protect women and children through the implementation of strong existing laws and sanctions against perpetrators.

Environmental security
In the reporting period, WANEP NEWS has monitored current and ongoing disease outbreaks and other relevant environmental security challenges in the region. Member States are responding to several disease outbreaks at the same time, though with low and moderate risks to the public health. For instance, concerning Dengue fever, there have been Cumulatively 102,817
suspected cases, 43,256 including confirmed and 430 deaths reported in 9 ECOWAS Member States between January and March 2024. Also, there were other disease outbreaks like Lassa Fever and Meningitis recorded in Ghana, Liberia, Nigeria, Benin, and Togo. In Nigeria for instance, there were 7 reported incidents of Lassa Fever with 19 deaths and 74 injuries, especially in Kano and Ebonyi States. In Ghana, two incidents of Lassa Fever with 10 deaths were recorded in the Upper West Region. In the reporting period, 69 incidents of communal violence such as farmer-herder conflicts, chieftaincy and land conflicts resulted in 26 deaths and injuries to 96 people in Ghana, Guinea, Nigeria, Togo, and Benin. A total of 156 fire incidents caused by arson, gas explosion, wildfire and electrical malfunctioning were recorded. These incidents resulted in 91 deaths with injuries to 55 others and property damage in Benin, Burkina Faso, Cote d’Ivoire, Liberia Senegal, and Guinea Bissau. Other environmental concerns recorded include 128 disaster incidents caused by rainstorms, flooding, and landslides which led to 176 fatalities with 1533 injuries and over 15,000 forced displacements, especially in Nigeria, Ghana, Liberia, Cote d’Ivoire, Senegal, Guinea, Benin, and Togo.

HIGHLIGHTS OF REGIONAL AND NATIONAL PROGRAMMES AND ACTIVITIES

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

1.1 WANEP and the European Union (EU-FPI) signed an addendum to the Electoral violence Monitoring Analysis and Mitigation (E-MAM) 2023-2026 project contract on 15th January 2024. An additional fund of 500,000 Euros was allocated to continue the implementation of the project in Senegal, Ghana, and Togo in 2024. The project addendum has capped the E-MAM 2023-2026 budget at 4.5 million Euros targeting 12 countries in West Africa. The EMAM will contribute to preventing conflict and promoting peacebuilding, minimising the escalation of conflict and election-related incidents in the ECOWAS region.

1.2 WANEP held an inception briefing on the implementation of the E-MAM 2023-2026 project in Ghana at the EU Delegation in Accra. In attendance were representatives of the EU Countries accredited to Ghana, the EC, UNDP, NPC, NCCE, IDEG, and CDD. The briefing shared information on the project objectives, strategies, and available funding. It also provided an opportunity to increase collaboration and synergy in the implementation process.

1.3 WANEP Early Warning and Network Development Departments, organised training on Data Analysis and Infographics on Early Warning products for elections in West Africa on 12th – 14th February 2024, in Abuja, Nigeria. Thirty-one participants comprised 15 NEWS Managers or representatives, WANEP and ECOWAS Analysts acquired new learning and skills in Visme and Power BI infographics software applications. The participants had practical sessions on data analysis and visualisation and produced sample reports with infographics.

1.4 A three-day workshop on Mentorship, Learning and Applied Skills Enhancement for the Coalition of Civil Society Organizations for Peace and Conflict Prevention in Central Africa (COPAC) Early Warning Reporters and WANEP NEWS Managers was organised in Abuja, Nigeria. Also in attendance were WANEP and ECOWAS early warning analysts to share experiences in data analysis and reporting. This workshop contributed to enhanced skills and new learning to analyse and report on early warning data generated by the different early warning systems, including the National Early Warning Systems (NEWS), African Union Reporter, ECOWARN and ECCAS-MARAC.

1.5 In the reporting period, National Early Warning System (NEWS) products were published and shared with various stakeholders and partners. A total of 210 Weekly Highlights and 42 Monthly Bulletins on peace and security challenges in the region were produced by the 14 National Offices of WANEP. Other products include four Situation Tracking (Senegal 3 and Togo 1) were produced on specific incidents and dynamics in the affected countries. NEWS Managers continue to submit
incidents and situation reports in WANEP NEWS and the early warning portals of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and the African Union.

1.6 **WANEP Ghana** organised routine virtual training and coaching sessions on early warning data collection and reporting for community monitors from the 16 regions of the country. The training contributed to improving the understanding of community monitors on the indicators and hotspots for data gathering and reporting.

1.7 **WANEP Ghana** in partnership with Care International continued implementation of activities under the project “Agricultural Governance, Resilience and Economic Empowerment (AGREE). The project team produced two specialised bi-weekly early warning reports and shared them with the Project Coordinating Committee (PCU).

1.8 **WANEP Gambia** held monthly meetings with the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) Peace and Development Adviser (PDA) and staff of the National Centre for the Coordination of Early Warning Response Mechanism (NCCRM). The meeting focussed on strengthening collaboration and partnerships to identify gaps in Early Warning and Response as well as provide recommendations for action.

1.9 **WANEP Côte d’Ivoire** participated in an online meeting on assessing emerging political and security trends and the spillover effects in West Africa. The activity brought together State and non-state actors, representatives of the European Union, Dutch Embassies, and International NGOs. A key output of the meeting was the creation of space for dialogue and identifying joint actions for the prevention of threats to peace and security in five targeted regions of the country.

1.10 **WANEP Côte d’Ivoire** participated in a lessons-learning and sharing workshop with the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) and civil society organisations as partners. The workshop focused on the governance framework related to countering violent extremism, illicit drugs, and crimes, especially following the attacks in 2018 in Kafolo, North of the country.

1.11 **The NEWS Manager of WANEP Côte d’Ivoire**, Dominique Coulibaly participated in a workshop organised by ECOWAS Early Warning Department on ECOWARN indicators. In the workshop, the various incidents and situation reporting indicators were reviewed and the capacity of the participants strengthened in data gathering, analysis and report writing.

1.12 **WANEP Burkina Faso** served as a lead facilitator in a workshop on early warning and human security organised by the International Organisation for Migration (IOM) on 9th – 13th January 2024. Twenty-seven participants including 5 women participated in the workshop.

1.13 Ahead of the 2024 Presidential Election, **WANEP Senegal** implemented the following actions:
   - **Held three National Electoral Violence Response Group (GNRVE) meetings** to peace and security dynamics ahead of the election on 24th March 2024. The 15-member group comprises civil society organisations, Non-Governmental Organisations, traditional and religious leaders, and the media discussed emerging threats to the electoral process and engaged relevant authorities for timely responses.
   - **WANEP Senegal trained and deployed 158 election observers** to monitor and report on threats to election security in key hotspot areas including Tambacounda, Dakar, Mbour, Diourbel, Louga, Saint-Louis, Ziguinchor, and Kolda.

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4 The activity is an integral part of a project funded by the Dutch Embassy in Burkina Faso with a focus on conflict monitoring in five targeted regions - Poro, Tchologo, Bounkani, Bagoué and Folon.
1.14 WANEP operated a three-day election situation room (ESR – opened from the 23rd – 25th March 2024) in Dakar for the presidential election. The ESR documented and responded to election-related threats before, during and after the election. The ESR facilitated the collection of data, analysis, and response to prevent violence in the election period. Preliminary press statements on the election were prepared and disseminated. A total of 158 observers were deployed, 45 people comprising collectors, analysts, communication experts and eminent members of the decision room in the ESR. A total of 1,619 reports were received and analysed including 26 incident reports, two declarations and three communiqués that were released as public information. The ESR hosted visitors from the EU, UNOWAS, ECOWAS, AU, and other international organisations. The E-MAM project interventions contributed to the peaceful outcome of the election in Senegal.

1.15 As a part of its community outreach interventions, WANEP Mali participated in a panel discussion on national early warning systems in the Sahel. Present in the forum were 30 members of the Sahel Network for the Prevention of Violent Extremism and Counter Terrorism. WANEP-Mali shared its practical experiences in the field of early warning and proffered suggestions to strengthen synergy and collaboration with other actors involved in early warning to improve alert and response.

2. TO STRENGTHEN WOMEN AND GIRLS’ CAPACITY FOR POLICY-INFLUENCING

2.1 International Women’s Day (IWD) 2024: WANEP joined the international community to commemorate IWD 2024 on 8th March 2024, with the theme: “Invest in women: Accelerate progress,” using the hashtag #InvestInWomen, while the campaign theme was: Inspire Inclusion (#InspireInclusion). The emphasis of the 2024 event was mainly on exploring sustainable strategies required for improving and accelerating investments for women.

2.2 GenderTalk Series #13: The 13th edition of the Gender Talk Series was also part of activities to commemorate the IWD 2024 under the theme: ‘Accelerating Women and Girls Progress through Strategic Investments.’ The event was attended by 40 participants including Anglophone and Francophone audiences. It featured four speakers with a proven track record in gender, youth, women, and peacebuilding who shared practical tips on effective strategies for accelerating investments in women and girls. A key aspect of the discussion centred on identifying the factors that hinder inclusivity and recognizing the blueprint deficits in addressing the challenges of women and girls. The key factors impeding the meaningful inclusion of women and girls include the yawning pay gap, negative media portrayal of women, and the lack of societal encouragement. In this wise, there is a need to embark on collective action, which involves a

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5 The two themes further reflected the theme of the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW), which stressed accelerating the achievement of gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls by addressing poverty, strengthening institutions and financing with a gender perspective.
deliberate commitment to creating spaces for women’s growth, effective mentorship to bridge the inter-generational divide as well as adopting a gender transformational approach to allow room for self-growth.

Also, at the **regional level**, WANP’s Women Peace and Security (WPS) Desk held several awareness and sensitisation activities including the production of short video clips with engaging messages shared widely on all WANEP social media handles. Similar events took place across the National Network Offices, where women and girls-focused activities were carried out as follows:

**2.3 WANEP Côte d’Ivoire** commemorated IWD 2024 with the theme "Acting together for equality in Côte d’Ivoire, eradicating poverty, strengthening institutions, investing in the future of women”. The network organised outreach campaigns with messages to promote women’s participation, protection, and empowerment at all levels in the country. Similarly, as part of the celebration, the secretariat participated in a workshop to review the draft Law No. 2019-870 on the representation of women in elected positions in the country. A follow-up committee comprising the Caucus of Women Senators and Civil Society was formed to lead advocacy campaigns on the reviewed legislation. The draft document was presented to the Caucus of Women Senators on 5th March 2024.

**2.4 To commemorate IWD 2024, WANEP Mali in partnership with the National Technical Committee on IWD** organised a community outreach to the Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) in Faladi to share information on the IWD concept and discussed issues of women’s rights protection and promotion as well as respect for humanitarian laws guiding the operations of IDP settlements. A total of 123 IDPs (90% women and 63% young people) were reached and better understood the issue of women’s rights and IDP protection in conflict and disaster responses in the country. **WANEP Mali also seized the occasion to officially hand over health kits and supplies to IDPs as a part of the WANEP 25th Anniversary commemoration.**

**2.5 In March 2024, WANEP Cote d’Ivoire completed the selection process of influential young leaders** under its PEACEWAY program. A total of 45 young people comprising 25 males and 20 females were selected from across the country and participated in a workshop to enhance their capacity in understanding and preventing violent extremism.

**2.6 On 29th March 2024, WANEP Guinea organised a virtual meeting on women's rights in the workplace** to commemorate IWD 2024. The meeting was moderated by two eminent women and over 80 participants from different sections of society. At the end of the meeting, recommendations were proffered to protect women’s rights to work and promote their participation in governance, peace, and security.

**2.7 WANEP Guinea organised a capacity building on the UNSCR 1325, violence against women, radicalization, and social cohesion** for 160 participants comprising women and girls. Similarly, a total of 19 awareness-raising and sensitization sessions were led by women and girls on UNSCR 1325 and the WPS agenda, preventing Sexual and Gender-based violence (SGBV) and violent extremism. A total of 475 women and girls were selected as participants from Macenta and Nzérékoré communities.

**2.8 In the first quarter of 2024, WANEP Burkina Faso organised a training on UNSCRs 1325 (Women Peace and Security), and 2250 (Youth Peace and Security) for 300 women’s organisations drawn from northern and central-western regions of the country. The events also raised awareness of women’s participation in the transition process. The targeted women’s groups down streamed the training received in their communities with a total of 1,075 women reached.**
2.9 WANEP Burkina Faso participated in a workshop to popularise an Advocacy Plan on the Protection and Promotion of the Rights of Women and Girls with Disabilities in Burkina Faso. The workshop was organised by the Association Action for a Better World and brought together 20 participants (16 females and 4 males).

2.10 WANEP-GB and a member organisation, N'NAFA SOBIA, organised a reflection session in the Quinara Region, Southern Province of Guinea-Bissau to mark the National Day of Reflection on Women’s Participation in Governance, peace, and Security. A total of 109 people, comprising 56 males (51%) and 53 females (49%) were present at the meeting. Participants shared key concerns over the lack of economic empowerment, rising SGBV and other crimes in their communities. Key recommendations included a) a follow-up advocacy visit to present the women’s concerns to the appropriate authorities for action. B) the need to collaborate with state and local authorities to raise awareness on issues of women’s empowerment and crime prevention, among others.

2.11 WANEP-GB participated in a validation workshop on the findings of an Assessment Study on the gender dimension of Disaster Risk Management, Epidemic Prevention and Response. The workshop organised by ACR brought together 25 participants drawn from state and non-state actors to validate the study findings related to gender mainstreaming in Disaster Risk Management and develop an engendered action plan to inform ARC’s interventions in Guinea-Bissau.

2.12 Between 15th and 18th January 2024, WANEP Togo participated in an extraordinary general meeting of the five SCOOP-S held in Lomé. A total of 198 people consisting of 52 males and 146 females participated in the meeting. The event focuses on taking stock of the activities of each SCOOP-S and presenting its annual progress as well as financial management reports to the membership. In conclusion, the meeting generated and published a communiqué on the statutes and revised internal regulations of the group.

2.13 WANEP Togo organised a two-day training of agricultural groups on agroecological techniques and practices in the Dzrékpo and Morétan communities. The presentations focused on the themes. A total of 40 members of agricultural cooperatives, including 28 female and 7 youth took part in the training and strengthened their capacity on the effects of climate change and agroecology techniques.

2.14 WANEP Niger was invited to facilitate a training session on health and reproductive rights for Defence and Security Forces (FDS) as well as human rights defenders in Niamey. A total of 25 officials of the Defence and Security Forces (FDS) of Niger and 25 women Human Rights Defenders were trained on conceptual frameworks of health, sexual and reproductive rights, the challenges, and opportunities for collaboration in service delivery.

2.15 WANEP Niger organised a workshop for CSOs, Youth Groups, and Women’s social networks on Humanitarian Mediation. The project supported by the Danish Refugee Council (DRC-Niger) aimed at training strategic and implementing partners on the application of humanitarian mediation and conflict management tools at the community level. A total of 15 females and 13 males participated in the activity held from 25th to 29th March 2024, in Niamey.
3. TO BROADEN THE PEACE EDUCATION PROGRAMME AND SUPPORT YOUTH PARTICIPATION AND VOICE IN ISSUES OF GOVERNANCE, PEACE, AND SECURITY

3.1 WANEP launched the 2nd edition of the Youth Transformational Empowerment and Mentorship (Y-TEaM) Programme. Thirty young people (50% female and male) were carefully selected from across the West Africa region as participants in the Y-TEaM 2024 cohort. The programme was officially launched in a virtual opening ceremony on 5th March 2024 by the WANEP Regional Coordinator for Network Development, Julien Ousso. In his remarks, he emphasised the importance of the Y-TEaM programme to WANEP, as part of its strategic plan for 2021-2025 to groom and empower young men and women to drive transformational change and sustainable peace in communities across the region. He also challenged the 2024 cohort to seize the opportunity to enhance their skills and make a meaningful impact in their communities. The 2024 cohorts will go through a 6-month online training, in-person internship and mentorship.

3.2 The Y-TEaM Newsletter 2023 edition has been published. It highlighted key achievements of the programme in 2023 as well as the experiences of the mentees in their post-training community engagements.

3.3 WANEP Gambia held a technical working group meeting on the establishment and full implementation of a National Action Plan (NAP) on the United Nations Security Council (UNSCR) 2250, Youth Peace and Security. One of the meeting resolutions was an agreement by members to prepare and organise an inclusive and participatory nationwide consultation with various actors including youth-serving agencies, youth and women’s groups, Faith-Based Organisations, CSOs, NGOs and individuals.

3.4 WANEP Burkina Faso organised training of trainers on non-violent conflict management for young people. A total of 6 young people were selected and trained. Similarly, the trainings were replicated targeting 30 young people for peace clubs and the Youth4peace network in 5 new localities including Ziniaré, Mogtédo, Gaoua, Ouahigouya, and Kaya.

3.5 WANEP Guinea conducted a recruitment process of 45 young people to participate in the development of a conflict prevention project and support youth initiatives in the country. The trainees were exposed to mentorship opportunities, knowledge, and skills in peacebuilding programming and activities. The trained youth were offered internship placements in the offices of WANEP Guinea and member organisations.

3.6 WANEP Mali participated in a virtual pre-evolution meeting on the implementation of UNSCR 2250 in Mali and Niger. The activity served as a framework for an in-depth assessment of the implementation of the YPS agenda in Mali, Niger, and other countries of the sub-region.
3.7 **WANEP Senegal held a radio discussion programme** to raise public awareness of non-violence in sports in local communities in the country. Four young people were the main discussants, while the listening public had opened questions and feedback sessions through phone-ins and post-radio interviews.

3.8 **As an integral component of the Gorée Institute’s Citizen Synergy for the Prevention of Violence and Peacebuilding (PAVE) project, WANEP Senegal organised a** training on the prevention of electoral violence for university students in Senegal. This activity targeted six young members of Youth for Peace in Senegal to engage in peace and non-violence education in universities across the country.

3.8 **WANEP Togo has launched a PEACE-WAY Youth Peace Training Scholarship Program.** The objective of the PEACE-WAY Fellowship was to enhance the knowledge, skills, and networks of young leaders for peace and conflict prevention in West Africa. The trainees will be deployed in remote communities to engage in conflict prevention and resolution activities in the communities. A total of 143 young people will be recruited from the savannah, Kara, and central regions.

3.9 **WANEP Senegal held a meeting with potential partners** including the United States (U.S.A) Embassy, MISAHEL and UNDP on the YPS agenda. The discussions were focussed on the Youth for Peace and National Youth for Peace Network interventions in line with the current implementation process towards the development of a National Action Plan on UNSCR 2250 in Mali.

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

4.1 **To strengthen community resilience and social cohesion, WANEP Ghana provided support under the** project “Sustainable and Empowering Peace Project” to promote a peace model through Turkey Berry cultivation to serve as fences for farms against invasion by cattle. The activities targeted 180 Farmers in West Gonja, 140 farmers and Fulbe herders in Tatalli-Sanguli, and 20 farmers and Fulbe herders in Zabzugu Districts. In addition, a total of 60 Farmers in Tatalli and Zabzugu Districts registered with NORTHCODE to integrate beekeeping on the farms to serve as additional income and security against cattle invasion. Eight cattle owners have also cited water points to construct boreholes to provide water for cattle to prevent competition with local communities over water facilities.

4.2 **WANEP Ghana held project inception meetings for stakeholders in 2 districts and 4 communities in the Savannah Region.** The project “Trust2Peace” supported by USAID is implemented in Mujipe and Mpaha in the Central Gonja District, Sonyo and Chibrenyoa in the Bole District. A total of 63 community stakeholders (49 Males and 14 females) were orientated on the project objectives and strategies as well as their roles and responsibilities in the implementation process. The activity created a sense of ownership of the project among stakeholders and enhanced inclusive multistakeholder platforms to manage Farmer-Herder conflicts in the districts.

Similarly, the “Trust2Peace” activity was launched in Lambussie District, Upper West Region, Bunkpurugu-Nankpanduri District in the North-east and Nanton Districts in the Northern Region to arouse public interest and share information on the project implementation strategies as well as the roles and responsibilities of the stakeholders. A total of 88 (75 males and 13 females) participated in the lunch. The stakeholders pledged to work with the Trust2Peace project to prevent conflicts and violent extremism in the targeted districts.

4.3 **Between January and March 2024, WANEP Cote d’Ivoire implemented a series of activities under the Trust Fund for Victims (TFV) funded program** to provide support to victims of the post-electoral crisis of 2011 in Yopougon and Abobno communities. The key outputs include:
a) psychosocial therapy sessions organised for 504 victims (452 females and 52 males) drawn from 17 communities.

b) provided financial support to 18 victims (14 females and 4 males) to engage in income-generating activities in their local communities.

c) renewed the contracts of 10 community agents comprising 4 males and 6 females for 11 months to ensure the procurement and distribution of materials to the project beneficiaries as well as assist in the monitoring and evaluation of the project.

d) held town hall meetings and consultations with stakeholders in affected communities to identify the type of memorial project to be done and visit the intended site.

e) a document consisting of technical sheets of 6 memorial projects to be implemented in the affected localities in Bloléquin, Duékoué, Doké, Pêhé, Abobo and Yopougon was presented to the Ministry of Solidarity and the Fight against Poverty as well as the National Social Cohesion Program (PNCS) office.

f) organised a training session on Module 3 of Integrative and Systemic Community Therapy as part of the programme funded by the Trust Fund for Victims. A total of 25 people including 6 females and 19 males took part in the training.

4.4 From 25th February to 5th March 2024, WANEP Côte d’Ivoire engaged the State and community stakeholders in 11 villages in the departments of Niakara and Vavoua to buy-in to a project that aims to identify and enable 813 people to obtain a certificate of nationality and/or a supplementary judgment in 2024-2025.

4.5 WANEP Guinea conducted a capacity-building training for 30 media practitioners (radio, print and digital media) on conflict-sensitive communication. The event was climaxed by a memorandum of understanding signed with the Guinean Press Agency to foster collaboration and ensure media coverage of activities of the network and membership across the country.

4.6 WANEP-GB in collaboration with Dynamique de Paix based in Ziguinchor organised a training for Peace Committees and Advisory Council members on the Methodology of Dialogue and Collaborative Justice in the Bafata and Cacheu regions of São Domingos, bordering Senegal. This training session was attended by peacebuilding organisations, local authorities of the São Domingos and other community stakeholders. The participants were encouraged to strengthen collaboration and synergy in combating cattle rustling in São Domingos and its surrounding communities.

4.7 WANEP Senegal participated in a workshop to raise awareness and information sharing on national legal frameworks on cattle rustling in Cacheu (São Domingos) and Bafata. The activity is an integral part of the project on combating cross-border cattle rustling between the borders of Senegal and Guinea Bissau.

4.8 WANEP Senegal organised four radio discussion programs and four inter-communal town hall meetings to raise awareness of the need for continuous dialogue between political parties and supporters in the departments of Guédiawaye, Pikine, Ziguinchor, Bignona and Saint-Louis. This activity contributed to dousing tensions among political actors before during and after the presidential election.

4.9 WANEP Togo organised a community dialogue forum on issues related to transhumance. Twenty-seven local herders and farmers including 6 women participated in the dialogue held in Tado (Moyen-Mono prefecture). The meeting focused on information sharing and discussed the challenges of farmers and herders on the framework governing transhumance in Togo. Participants adopted a communiqué to foster peaceful resolution of conflicts and promote social cohesion in the country.
4.10 WANEP Mali organised capacity building for community stakeholders on the SSR Strategy and Action Plan (2022-2024) in the Circles of Mopti, Djenné and Bandiagara. The event targeted 64 people, (24 women and 29 young people representing 45% of the participants) including Administrative and political authorities, local leaders, civil society organizations youth and women's groups, IDPs, and Just Future partner NGOs. The event contributed to strengthening knowledge and local ownership of the SSR strategy and stakeholders’ commitments to promoting peace and security in Mali.

4.11 From 5th to 25th February 2024, WANEP Niger was part of the first cohort of 26 people, including 11 women and 15 men to participate in middle-level coursework on politics and democracy organised by the Netherlands Institute for Multiparty Democracy (NIMD). The main objective of the training was to promote multi-party democracy by strengthening the skills of political actors and stakeholders in Niger. The training covered a wide range of topics, such as political leadership, negotiation techniques, democratic governance, conflict mediation, political communication, etc. The participants committed to integrating new learning into their engagements and activities.

4.12 WANEP Niger organised a workshop for community and traditional leaders on Health and Reproductive Rights in Niamey. The objective was to improve the knowledge of community leaders and traditional authorities in sexual reproductive health and rights. Fourteen women and nine men participated and enhanced their knowledge in the subject area.

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

5.1. During this period, the Research and Action for Peace (REcAP) Network, coordinated by WANEP in partnership with the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) and the Danish Refugee Council implemented the following actions:

a) Internal Coordination Meetings Organised - The REcAP Secretariat held bi-weekly internal coordination meetings aimed at sharing information and reviewing the implementation trajectory of key deliverables. The meetings targeted the mid-level management and senior colleagues from the three partner organisations.

b) Development of the Network’s Operational Framework to ensure its sustainability - The draft of the operational framework and a Strategic Action Plan (SAP) have been developed and reviewed by the consortium partners and the FPI Unit of the EU. The feedback was provided to the consultant to finalise the document for validation.

c) Research Conducted to Produce Policy Briefs and Working Papers - Qualitative studies were conducted to produce four policy briefs, while there are ongoing actions to also produce three working papers. The research products including the first policy brief were disseminated through the REcAP website and other social media platforms. In line with the EU-approved communication strategy, all evidence-based recommendations were also disseminated through articles, press releases, video documentaries and interview scripts.

d) REcAP’s Website was updated, and the Online Platform was created to enhance the visibility of the network and dissemination of project products.

e) The REcAP Network organised training on Prevention and conflict management in Benin, from 22nd to 26th January 2024, and Mauritania, from 4th to 7th March 2024, respectively. The trainings were facilitated by the project team with complimentary support from the WANEP

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6 Policy Briefs were completed, with the following titles:

- Mitigating Armed Conflict in the Lake Chad Basin through Strengthening Regional Cooperation on Climate Change and Natural Resource Management
- Community Mechanisms and Structures to Counter the Threat of Violent Extremism in Northern Côte d'Ivoire.
- Education under threat: The future of schools in areas under terrorist threat in Northern Benin
- Women’s community initiatives to combat violent extremism in Northern Benin.
National Network in Benin. Training modules were designed to equip participants with the knowledge and skills to effectively contribute to conflict prevention and management, to prevent violent extremism and to enable them to acquire a range of practical skills related to handling conflict situations.

5.2 **WANEP Burkina Faso finalised a study** on the vulnerabilities of communities to violent extremism in the Madjoari, Pama, Tiébélé, Dakola, Bittou, Yargatenga, Sangha, Soudougui.

5.3 With support from UNDP, **WANEP Gambia** organised a post-research fieldwork reflection on the 2019 Country Development Analysis (CDA). Also, key informant interviews (KII) were conducted with stakeholders from government, institutions, political parties and CSO on peace and conflict drivers across the country. Data on existing and emerging peace and conflict drivers obtained.

5.4 **WANEP Gambia participated in a Stakeholder consultation on the Electoral reform processes in the Gambia.** The event was organised by the National Development Institute (NDI) to provide updates and lead conversations on the status of the Election Bill currently tabled at the National Assembly.

5.5 **WANEP-Cote d'Ivoire participated in a Civil Society Roundtable on Good Governance and Transparency** organised by the Kofi Annan Foundation and Interpeace on 7th March 2024.

5.6 **WANEP Guinea Bissau in collaboration with the National Centre for the Coordination of Early Warning Response Mechanism (NCCRM) held meetings with a UNDP delegation to discuss current threats to peace and security in the country.** Also, the meetings discussed areas of synergy and partnership in coordinating community peacebuilding interventions in Guinea-Bissau.

5.7 **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.

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

6.1 From 14 to 15 March 2024, **WANEP held the 2024 Participatory Review and Analysis Processes (PRAPs) and commemorated its 25th Anniversary** with the theme “25 Years of Building Peace and Inspiring Change”. The event was organised at the Labadi Beach Hotel in Accra, Ghana and attended by National Network Coordinators, National and Regional Board chairpersons or representatives as well as staff of the Regional Office. The 2024 PRAPs provided an opportunity for the critical analysis of the peace and security outlook for the year and helped in enhancing response strategies to minimize the effects of identified security threats in the region. Major outcomes from the 2024 edition
included an agreed strategic focus and identification of new partnerships to enhance programme implementation. Organisational policy implementation gaps and the need for institutional governance enhancements were also identified and appropriate action plans were developed and implemented to support the most challenged National Networks.

6.2 The WANEP Organisational Development Index (WODI) 2023 assessment was conducted, and the outcome was presented at the 2024 PRAPs held in Accra-Ghana. All 15 National Networks were self-assessed and completed the online portal with 7 assessment indicators. This was followed by three different phases of reviews by a committee at the regional office before finalisation and presentation at PRAPs. According to the WODI data, the index moved from 75.83% in 2022 to 80.24 in 2023, which indicated progress with 4.41 points gained in 2023. WANEP is now in category A (ranging from 80% -100% and qualified as Excellent). Certificates were awarded to the three best-performing networks as listed:
   1. WANEP Mali (93.97%),
   2. WANEP Togo (93.70%), and
   3. WANEP Niger (87.67%).

6.3 WANEP Re-launched operations in Cabo Verde. After the required approval by the Management team, a stakeholder’s mapping exercise and Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) completed and signed with the Cape Verdean Association of Fight Against Gender-Based Violence (ACLCVBG) to host the WANEP NEWS Manager, Talina Pereira in Praia. Also, the NEWS Manager has been taken through an onboarding orientation session on the organisation’s objective, mission, vision, and programming on the margins of the 2024 PRAPs and continued virtually by relevant WANEP staff.

6.4 WANEP Togo organised a refresher training for staff on gender and related topics. Seventeen staff members, including 9 females, and 8 males participated in the training. The sessions provided an understanding of gender-related concepts and challenges in the country.

6.5 On 12th January 2024, WANEP Togo organised a meeting to share information and educate staff on the National Social Security products in the country. Twenty staff, including 10 females and 10 males took part in the information session. This meeting allowed the staff better to understand the National Social Security Fund and its products.

6.6 WANEP Mali conducted a capacity-building session on the new Security Sector Reform (SSR) Strategy and the 2022-2024 Action Plan for members of the Just Future Alliance (JFA) in Mali. The event targeted 18 participants including 7 women and 11 men of which 75% were young people. The participants enhanced their knowledge and understanding of Mali’s SSR strategy and action (2022-2024). The session was also an opportunity for the members of JFA to discuss the consortium’s activities that are related to the SSR strategy and action plan.


6.8 In compliance with WANEP’s practices and procedures, WANEP Mali and Togo held their General Assembly (GA) on the 1st and 27th of March 2024, respectively. The events brought together Network members, National Board members, staff, and the media to discuss annual program reports and revise strategic plans and policies to better position the networks to deliver on their mandates. Key among the GA resolutions was the need to consolidate gains, strengthen partnerships and integrate gender and disability dimensions in future actions in the country.

6.9 WANEP Niger participated in a training for CSOs, media owners and journalists on humanitarian principles and advocacy organised by the Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC) from 27th – 28th February
The main objective of the training was to familiarize 25 participants (7 women and 18 men) with the core humanitarian principles, normative frameworks, and protocols, and how they can be applied in humanitarian activities in Niger.

7. COLLABORATIONS AND EFFECTIVE NETWORKING

7.1 On 19th February 2024, WANEP organised a one-day expert workshop to validate an online Early Warning Reporting portal designed to monitor and report on climate change, crime, and conflict in coastal communities in West Africa. The portal is part of WANEP’s implementation and contribution to a broader three-year project titled, “Coping with Climate Change as a Cause of Conflict in Coastal Communities of West Africa (C7-West Africa)“, implemented by a consortium of partners comprising FAIMM, Academic Associates Peace Works (AAPW), Health of Mother Earth Foundation (HOMEF) and WANEP with support from the European Union. The portal was developed and validated to facilitate data collection, analysis, informed community responses and development of policy recommendations that enhance the capacities and resilience of coastal communities on climate change and conflict in West Africa.

7.2 On 16th – 18th January 2024, WANEP in collaboration with ECOWAS and GIZ organised a 3-day training and interactive workshop for EMBs, political parties and civil society actors at the Pullman Dakar Hotel in Senegal. Participants were led through a series of presentations and plenary discussions on conflict analysis, understanding the dynamics of electoral conflicts, dialogue, and mediation.

7.3 The ECOWAS Early Warning Department invited WANEP to participate in training and experience sharing with personnel of the National Centres for the Coordination of Early Warning and Response Mechanism (NCCRM) in the analysis and report writing on crime and criminality in the region in Abuja, Nigeria.

7.4 WANEP Burkina Faso signed a new partnership agreement with UNDP and EIRENE Sahel under the project titled "Support for Strengthening the capacities and Role of Women and Girls in the Transition and Peacebuilding Processes" and the project "Promotion of Peace for Youth and with Youth (PPJ)/Education for Peace and Democracy", respectively. Similarly, the network has received a letter of support from the Ministry of Sports, Youth and Employment as part of the process of establishing a partnership with the African Development Bank (AfDB).

7.5 On 29th February 2024, WANEP Niger met with the First Secretary of the Embassy of the Netherlands in Niger to share information and updates on the Just Future project implementation and activities of the JFA in the country.

UPCOMING INTERNATIONAL DAY COMMEMORATIONS (LIST RELATED TO PEACE AND SECURITY)

April
24 April - International Day of Multilateralism and Diplomacy for Peace
25 April - World Malaria Day

May
03 May - World Press Freedom Day
16 May - International Day of Living Together in Peace
29 May - International Day of UN Peacekeepers

June
04 June - International Day of Innocent Children Victims of Aggression
WANEP Q1 Progress Report

05 June - International Day for the Fight against Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated Fishing
12 June - World Day Against Child Labour
17 June - World Day to Combat Desertification and Drought
18 June - International Day for Countering Hate Speech
24 June - International Day of Women in Diplomacy
26 June - International Day against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking
26 June - United Nations International Day in Support of Victims of Torture

WANEP QUARTER ONE - SOCIAL MEDIA HIGHLIGHTS WITH HIGH IMPRESSIONS