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# **Evaluation of WANEP's 2015-2020 Strategic Plan Implementation**

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Final Report

Submitted to

**West African Network for Peacebuilding  
(WANEP)**

By

**Abiodun Onadipe and Daniel K. B. Inkoom**

Independent Consultants

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

West African Network for Peacebuilding's (WANEP) Strategic Plan (2015-2020) proposed revamping and streamlining WANEP's internal administrative and governance processes, with the national networks being the major focus alongside enhancing the capacity of communities to enable them be more effective as implementing partners in optimal operation of the National Early Warning and Response Systems (NEWRS). Halfway through the implementation of the Strategic Plan, in 2018, WANEP carried out a mid-term evaluation as part of its constant learning and improvement agenda. The current evaluation builds on the findings of that mid-term evaluation, while placing emphasis on other aspects of the Strategic Plan. The main goal of this end-of-term evaluation is to document successes, challenges and lessons learned by WANEP during the five-year period.

A qualitative process was employed. Semi-structured interviews were used with appropriate stakeholders in addition to existing documentation on WANEP's structures, processes and operations. Apart from the 15 National Network Coordinators (NNCs) questionnaires were shared with about 45 key stakeholders from various backgrounds across the continent, and at different governmental and non-governmental levels, to provide better context of the programme. Online interviews with senior Regional Secretariat staff provided other primary data and information for appropriate triangulation. Relevant documents were also collected in order to conduct a literature review for best practices and bring to bear on the assignment some level of regional comparative analysis.

The results of the evaluation indicated the following specific achievements of WANEP within the five years of the Strategic Plan Implementation:

- i) WANEP has over the period continued to build a strong institutional structure that is able to respond and adjust to changing demands and conditions especially those imposed by the withdrawal of DANIDA from the funding, and the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic in the year 2020. In spite of these challenges and the dynamic situation in the Sub region, WANEP was able to implement over 80% (eighty percent) of its plan during the period without significant adverse effect in the staff numbers and conditions of service.
- ii) On Early Warning and Response, WANEP was able to redesign and set up strong, indigenous, internally-driven EWS in 14 out of the 15 states and capacities of local structures have been built to enable them be self-sustaining. This included a critical mass of monitors and the redesigning of the monitoring architecture. In addition, support has been provided to states and states institutions and high political in ECOWAS member countries. WANEP has also gone beyond West Africa to initiate partnerships with CSOs and RECs including ECCAS, SADC and AU to create synergies on peace and security issues.
- iii) Increased ability and leverage to support States and State institutions as well as ECOWAS and AU in spite of the challenging contexts in states and the reforms

within the continental bodies. WANEP has been able to do this as a result of the credibility it has built over the years within the sub-region and beyond. Linked to this is the ability of WANEP to generate additional funding from the initial JFA. (ADA, USAID, UN-WOMEN, EU-EMAM, GIZ, WELL SPRING PF, UNDP), among others.

- iv) WANEP within the Strategic Plan's period has also supported the development of National Action Plans for 13 out of the 15 countries, taking into consideration regional level issues and contextual imperatives at the national Level.
- v) Gender responsiveness is another area where WANEP has achieved success. Women, peace and security issues were streamlined into action plans covering early warning and inclusivity. WANEP partnered with the United Nations Office for West Africa and the Sahel (UNOWAS) to implement programmes in Mali, Burkina Faso, Niger and la Cote d'Ivoire with a strong focus on women participation in decision making.
- vi) WANEP has through the implementation of the Strategic Plan improved its credibility among the donor community. This was underpinned by high public visibility, its transparency and accountability to donors and community members. Through the implementation of this five-year Strategic Plan, WANEP has gone a considerable way to achieving this overall objective; however, there's still a lot to do yet.
- vii) The current institutional structure of WANEP has enabled it to a large extent in delivering on the priority objectives of the Strategic Plan, though specific areas still need to be strengthened – network structures, human resources in terms of staff capacity, etc.

For the future, the following are recommended:

- i) *Building local structures and improving engagement with national networks for response*  
In its bid to remain relevant at the national and continental level, WANEP must continue to engage the member networks at the national level as they are fundamental to the future sustainability of WANEP. Full engagement of the networks to improve the structures, functions, and effectiveness will be required in the next phase. The working relationships between the Regional Secretariat, National Network secretariat and member organizations need to be strengthened. The roles and functions of the National Coordinators who coordinate the work of the secretariat and the work of the member organisations in-country and Regional coordinators need to be re-examined to ensure effectiveness. Work at the regional and national secretariats need to be further refined.

- ii) *Managing expectations based on capacity to deliver*  
WANEP has through its successes generated a lot of demand for professional services from governments, RECS, and other UN bodies. WANEP will have to manage expectations and respond to increasing demands based on their established and projected capacities and resources available for effectiveness. In this regard, WANEP should focus more on the utilisation of the services of the Network members and associations. Also, whilst the present capacity can sustain the organisation, a bit more engineering needs to be done to some national networks to move the organisation to the next level everyone is expecting WANEP to be and also be able to support other parts of Africa.
- iii) *Youth, Peace and Security*  
Given the structure and dynamics of the population in the sub-region, more attention needs to be focused on the Youth and services related to them. WANEP should go beyond Peace education and the project-based approach to a wider, vision-based approach that address issues linked to the articulation of localised grievances such as perceptions of alienation, marginalisation, among others, which are becoming drivers for violent extremism and terrorism within the region and beyond. Extremism in Burkina Faso, Niger, Mali, and Nigeria is a threat to the whole region and work around the area must be enhanced. There is also a greater need now than ever before to work with local and national movements to call for transparent and accountable governance in the region. Any effort for WANEP to work in good governance in addition to its work in preventing violence in elections will greatly enhance peace in the region. The next phase should therefore particularly look at the issue of violent extremism especially with the youth.
- iv) *Financial sustainability: expanding the scope for funding, including “Business Funding” and consultancy services*  
Within the period of the implementation, WANEP was able to attract funding from USAID, UNDP and the EU. WANEP may have to further intensify the effort to diversify their funding streams to be able to deal with ancillary systemic issues that negate peace and security. In addition, the idea to engage the private sector for “Business Funding” and consultancy services to support peace support operations is recommended. WANEP should also continue to seek to expand its engagement with ECOWAS to involve more directorates in the ECOWAS Commission and the African Union. WANEP should continue to improve on its partnership building initiatives and building relationships with embassies in every country where there is diplomatic missions. This would help raise more funding away from the current funding partners. WANEP should continue to engage with our partners with credible proposals detailing well thought out strategies to address the emerging problems.

- v) *Dealing with fallouts of COVID-19*  
 There was a sharp rise in reported cases of Sexual and Gender-Based Violence (SGBV) as a result of the lockdown and quarantine measures put in place to slow down the spread of COVID-19. WANEP could partner with women, youth and children focused organisations to help address this scourge.
- vi) *Developing structured research competencies*  
 Over the period of the Strategic Plan implementation, WANEP developed its research capacities and delivered useful analysis and assessments on peace and security in West Africa. WANEP should continue to strengthen and systematize its research capacities and train Regional and National level staff to develop new competencies in research methodologies. WANEP could aim to become a “Think-Tank, Training and Research-based Advocacy Organisation” in addition to its traditional competence.
- vi) *Develop strategies to reduce staff attrition*  
 WANEP’s strength lies in its staff. There is a threat of WANEP losing some of its senior and well qualified staff to other organisations if new and creative ways are not employed to keep the workforce motivated and committed. Given the fact that cases of staff attrition is an issue that cannot be entirely eliminated, it might be necessary to develop a comprehensive remuneration package that links qualification, performance and incentive systems to reduce this trend.
- vii) *Improved Communication*  
 Better communication on the mandate of WANEP is critical to managing expectation and make its partners and stakeholders understand that the organisation cannot be expected to undertake every aspect in the peace and security field.
- viii) *Sustainability*  
 The ability to remain current and relevant should be a major plank of WANEP’s sustainability plans. Consultancy policies should be reviewed and updated, research publications should be available in all formats (subscription and sale inclusive), training can also be offered on a commercial basis as well as investments in real estate are some areas that can provide different streams of income for the organisation. This will go a long way to reducing WANEP’s dependence on donor funded programmes and help it to become a vision-driven organisation it aspires to be.