GUIDELINES
ON WOMEN, PEACE AND SECURITY

ECOWAS DEPARTMENT OF POLITICAL AFFAIRS, PEACE AND SECURITY (PAPS)

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TABLE OF CONTENT

I. ACRONYMS

AU	African Union
CoW	ECOWAS Council of the Wise
CRSV	Conflict-Related Sexual Violence
CSOs	Civil Society Organisations
CVE/CT	Countering Violent Extremism and Counterterrorism
DDR	Disarmament, Demobilisation and Reintegration
DPA	Directorate of Political Affairs
DPKO	Department of Peacekeeping Operations
ECOMIB	ECOWAS Mission in Guinea Bissau
ECOMIG	ECOWAS Mission in Gambia
ECONEC	ECOWAS Network of Electoral Commissions
ECOSOC	United Nations Economic and Social Council
ECOWARN	ECOWAS Warning and Response Network
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
ECPF	ECOWAS Conflict Prevention Framework
EGDC	ECOWAS Gender Development Center
ESF	ECOWAS Standby Forces
EU	European Union
FBA	Folke Bernadotte Academy
GBV	Gender-based Violence
GESF	Gender and Elections Strategic Framework
GIZ	German Corporation for International Cooperation
HIV/AIDS	Human Immunodeficiency Virus/Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome
IASC	Inter-Agency Standing Committee
ISAC	International Small Arms Control Standard
KAIPTC	Kofi Annan International Peacekeeping Training Centre
MARWOPNET	Mano River Women's Peace Network
MFD	Mediation Facilitation Division
MNJTF	Multinational Joint Task Force
MSC	Mediation and Security Council
NAP	National Action Plan
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation

NOPSWECO	Network on Peace and Security for Women in the ECOWAS Region
OSCE	Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe
PAPS	Political Affairs, Peace and Security
PKO	Peacekeeping Operation
PR	Proportional Representation
PSEA	Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse
PSO	Peace Support Operation
PSOD	Peace Support Operations Division
REC	Regional Economic Community
SALW	Small Arms and Light Weapons
SGBV	Sexual and Gender-Based Violence
SSR	Security Sector Reform
SViC	Sexual Violence in Conflict
ToC	Transnational Organised Crime
UN	United Nations
UN CASA	United Nations Coordinating Action on Small Arms
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNOWAS	United Nations Office for West Africa and the Sahel
UNSCR	United Nations Security Council Resolution
WANEP	West African Network for Peacebuilding
WAPCCO	West African Police Chiefs Committee
WAWA	West African Women's Association
WILPF	Women's International League for Peace and Freedom
WPS	Women, Peace and Security

II. TABLE OF BOXES

Since its formation in 1975, the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) has steadily pursued its goals of economic integration, and crafted a sustainable environment for peace and security in the region. Through its legal frameworks and mechanisms, ECOWAS has also ensured inclusive and participatory governance processes, including the rights and roles of women in peace processes.

While adhering to international frameworks on Women, Peace and Security (WPS), such as the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (1995) and the United Nations Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 1325 and subsequent resolutions, ECOWAS has developed legal frameworks that recognise the importance of safeguarding the role of women in governance, electoral processes, conflict prevention and resolution and peacebuilding. These frameworks include the Supplementary Protocol on Democracy and Good Governance (2001), the ECOWAS Gender Policy (2005), the ECOWAS Conflict Prevention Framework (2008) and the Gender and Elections Strategic Framework (2016).

Within a structured plan to effectively implement these regional texts and in line with UNSC Resolution 1325, which addresses two major points – the disproportionate impact of violent conflict and war on women and girls, as well as the crucial role that women should play in conflict prevention, conflict resolution, peace-making and peacebuilding, my office established a Women, Peace and Security Advisory Committee in 2017. I would like to seize this opportunity to pay tribute to the (then) Commissioner for PAPS, Mrs Halima Ahmed, under whose leadership this important committee was established. The PAPS WPS Advisory Committee, made up of focal points from PAPS divisions, is mandated to ensure a continuous process of gender mainstreaming within the Directorates in the Department of Political Affairs, Peace and Security (PAPS), as well as the Early Warning Directorate.

The Committee was conceptualised using a strategic and operational approach. The strategic approach sought to reaffirm the holistic implementation of the WPS Agenda and recognise gender equality and women empowerment as a prerequisite for addressing the prevention, management and resolution of conflict in the region. The operational approach focuses on training and relevant activities to be implemented during ECOWAS field missions.

Through the support of the Folke Bernadotte Academy (FBA), a Swedish government agency for peace, security and development, the Committee organised training on gender mainstreaming in 2017. This was followed by a Women, Peace and Security Strategy Meeting in 2018 between the PAPS Committee, the Department of Social Affairs and Gender and the Gender Development Centre. A strategic workshop was organised for PAPS management, while technical staff received a training called "Know your Women, Peace and Security Legal Framework" in 2018 and

2019, respectively.

The capacities of the ECOWAS peacekeeping missions (in The Gambia – ECOMIG and in Guinea Bissau – ECOMIB), as well as the defence and security forces of those countries, have also been strengthened in conflict-related sexual violence in 2018, 2019 and 2020.

Finally, the members of the Committee have received Gender Advisor certification training at the FBA office in Sandö, Sweden, further enhancing their capacity to carry out their mandate.

The Guidelines serve as a reference for the staff of the PAPS Department on the gender dimension of each thematic area covered by the Directorates of Political Affairs and Peacekeeping and Regional Security, the ECOWAS Standby Force and Early Warning, which also covers operational conflict prevention. The main objective of the Guidelines is to incorporate the WPS Agenda into the work of each division of the PAPS Department and contribute to enhancing the gender-responsive operational capacity of the ECOWAS Commission with the overall goal of strengthening the implementation of the WPS Agenda.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Consultant, Dr. Ibrahim Bangura, the PAPS Women, Peace and Security Committee, led by Dr. Onyinye Onwuka, Principal Programme Officer, Political Affairs and International Cooperation and staff of the PAPS and the Early Warning Directorate as well as from the Department of Social Affairs and Gender for their collective efforts that resulted in this robust document that will systemically ensure greater gender mainstreaming and adherence to UNSCR 1325 in ECOWAS' peace and security architecture.

I also appreciate the support from the Folke Bernadotte Academy (FBA) to various WPS initiatives in the PAPS Department. The FBA has indeed left an indelible mark on ECOWAS through the strengthening of capacities of the PAPS staff and the WPS Committee to improve the implementation of the Women, Peace and Security Agenda.

Finally, I would invite all staff and associates of the PAPS Department to make effective use of these Guidelines, bearing in mind that gender mainstreaming is an essential requirement for sustainable peace and security efforts and that the full participation of both women and men is critical to every aspect of achieving stability within our communities.

Abuja, December 2020

General Francis. A. BEHANZIN
Commissioner for Political Affairs, Peace and Security

Box 1: Key Definitions

Below are the key definitions of terms used in these guidelines:

The term **"conflict-related sexual violence" (CRSV)** refers to rape, sexual slavery, forced prostitution, forced pregnancy, forced abortion, enforced sterilisation, forced marriage, and any other form of sexual violence of comparable gravity perpetrated against women, men, girls or boys that is directly or indirectly linked to a conflict. The term also encompasses trafficking in persons when committed in situations of conflict for the purpose of sexual violence and/or exploitation (UN 2020, Conflict-Related Sexual Violence – Report of the United Nations Secretary-General, s/2020/487). The Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court (1998) recognises conflict-related sexual violence as a war crime, a crime against humanity and, in some instances, genocide (Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court, 1998 (ratified in 2002)).

The empowerment of women concerns women gaining power and control over their own lives. It involves awareness-raising, building self-confidence, expansion of choices, increased access to and control over resources. It also includes actions to transform the structures and institutions that reinforce and perpetuate gender discrimination and inequality (UN Women Training Centre 2020, Gender Equality Glossary – "Empowerment of women and girls").

Gender refers to the roles, behaviours, activities and attitudes that a society considers appropriate for women, men, boys and girls at a certain time and determines what is expected, allowed and valued in a woman or a man in a given context. It relates to the social attributes and opportunities associated with being male and female and the relationships between women and men and girls and boys, as well as the relationships between women and between men. These attributes, opportunities and relationships are socially constructed and learned through socialisation processes, meaning that they are both context/time specific and changeable. In most societies, there are differences and inequalities between women and men in assigned responsibilities, activities undertaken, access to and control over resources, as well as decision-making opportunities. Gender is part of a broader socio-cultural context, in which other important criteria for analysis include age, class, poverty level and ethnicity. (UN Women Training Centre 2020, Gender Equality Glossary – "Gender").

Gender analysis is an analytical tool to examine how differences in gender roles, activities, needs, opportunities, rights and power affect men, women, girls and boys in a certain situation or context. Gender analysis examines the relationships between females and males, their access to and control of resources, and the constraints they face

relative to each other. An analysis should be performed before all activities and integrated into all sector assessments or situational analyses to ensure that gender-based injustices and inequalities are not worsened by planned interventions. Where possible, greater equality and justice in gender relations should be promoted (UN Women Training Centre 2020, Gender Equality Glossary – "Gender Analysis").

Gender-Based Violence (GBV) is an umbrella term. It refers to any harmful act that is perpetrated against a person's will and that is based on socially ascribed (i.e. gender) differences between males and females. Gender-based violence includes all acts that inflict physical, sexual or mental harm or suffering, threats of such acts, coercion and other deprivations of a person's liberty. These acts can occur both in public and in private. Gender-Based Violence is often referred to as Sexual and Gender-Based Violence to highlight the often sexual nature of the harmful act (IASC 2015, Gender-Based Violence Guidelines).

Gender Mainstreaming is a strategy to promote gender equality by institutionalising a gender perspective throughout an organisation, in which it is everyone's responsibility to consider how women and men (girls and boys) are impacted by all work processes. UN ECOSOC uses the following definition: "Mainstreaming a gender perspective is the process of assessing the implications for women and men of any planned action, including legislation, policies

or programs, in all areas and at all levels. It is a way to make women's as well as men's concerns and experiences an integral dimension of the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation (M&E) of policies and programs in all political, economic and societal spheres so that women and men benefit equally and inequality is not perpetuated. The goal is to achieve gender equality" (United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) agreed conclusions, 1997/2).

Gender Perspective is a way of seeing or analysing reality by looking at the impact of gender on peoples' opportunities, social roles and interactions. The perspective helps to understand gender inequalities between different groups of women, men, girls and boys in a specific context, i.e. the unequal distribution of power that provides women, men, girls and boys with different needs, rights and opportunities. A gender perspective is what enables a gender analysis to be conducted and the subsequent gender mainstreaming of any proposed programme, policy or organisation (UN Women Training Centre 2020, Gender Equality Glossary – Gender Perspective, and Folke Bernadotte Academy (FBA) 2013, Bureaucratic Gender Mainstreaming: Easy to do, Difficult to Avoid, Sweden).

Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA) refers to all measures to protect people from any acts of sexual exploitation and sexual abuse committed by personnel from international actors, such as

the United Nations (UN), other inter-governmental, governmental and Non-Governmental Organisations (NGO), against the population in the context where the personnel works. Sexual exploitation refers to actual or attempted abuse of a position of vulnerability, power, or trust for sexual purposes, including, but not limited to, profiting monetarily, socially or politically from the sexual exploitation of another. Sexual abuse refers to the "actual or threatened physical intrusion of a sexual nature, whether by force or under unequal or coercive conditions". Sexual exploitation and abuse is often referred to as "SEA" (United Nations 2003, UN Secretary-General's Bulletin on protection from sexual exploitation and abuse (ST/SGB/2003/13)).

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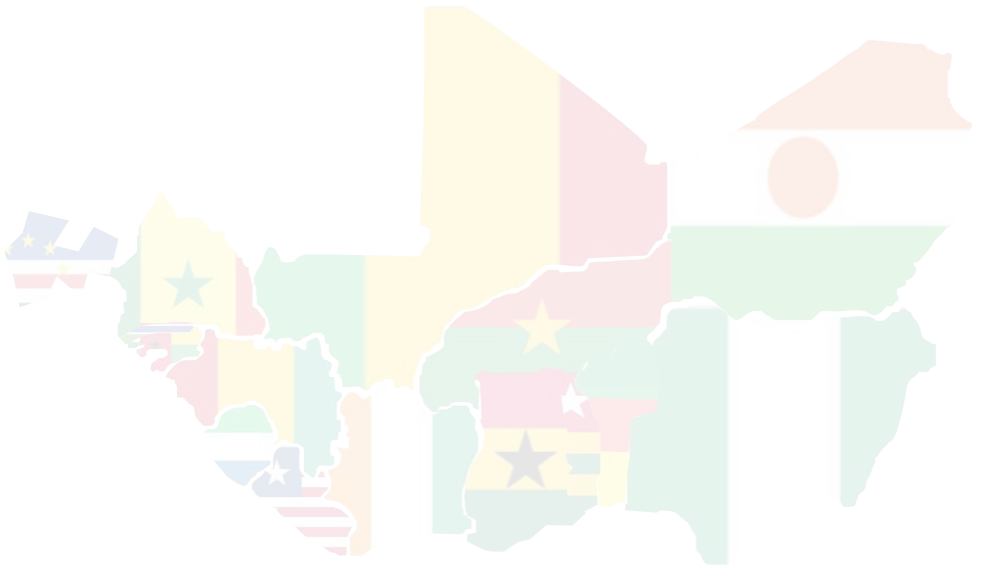
INTRODUCTION

- **OBJECTIVE AND AUDIENCE OF THE GUIDELINES**
- **CONFLICT AND THE WOMEN, PEACE AND SECURITY AGENDA**
- **WOMEN, PEACE AND SECURITY IN WEST AFRICA**
- **STRATEGY FOR GENDER MAINSTREAMING IN ECOWAS**

1. INTRODUCTION

The Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) was established on 28 May 1975 with the aim of promoting economic cooperation and integration among its Member States. With the understanding that peace is a prerequisite to economic growth, ECOWAS expanded its mandate in its Revised Treaty (1993) to include the maintenance of peace, security and stability in the region. The responsibility of executing the mandate of ECOWAS in the areas of peace and security lies with the Department of Political Affairs, Peace and Security (PAPS). ECOWAS also adopted several legal frameworks to guide the peace and security internal decision-making processes and external interventions in Member States. These frameworks include the Protocol relating to the Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management, Resolution, Peacekeeping and Security (1999), the Supplementary Protocol on Democracy and Good Governance (2001), the Convention on Small Arms and Light Weapons, their Ammunition and other related materials (2006), the ECOWAS Conflict Prevention Framework (2008), the ECOWAS Counter-Terrorism Strategy (2013) and the ECOWAS Policy Framework on Security Sector Reform and Governance (2016).

The legal frameworks on peace and security are operationalised by the Directorate of Political Affairs (DPA), Directorate of Peacekeeping and Regional Security (DPRS), the ECOWAS Standby Force (ESF), the ECOWAS Peace Fund (EPF) and the Directorate of Early Warning. While there have been some efforts to mainstream a gender perspective in the policies of the different PAPS Divisions, such as the adoption of the ECOWAS Gender and Elections Strategic Framework (2015) and the Gender in Small Arms and Light Weapons Control Initiative (2019), there has not been a comprehensive document to consolidate all efforts. With an understanding that the ECOWAS Gender Policy from 2005 requires an update, development of the present Women, Peace and Security (WPS) Guidelines for the PAPS Department aims to ensure that ECOWAS peace and security-related activities are gender mainstreamed and adhere to the Women, Peace and Security agenda. The PAPS Women, Peace and Security Advisory Committee, set up in July 2017, advanced the development of the present Guidelines. The Committee is responsible for facilitating and supporting gender mainstreaming across the programmes and the policies of the PAPS Department. It comprises representatives from each Directorate of PAPS, as well as the Early Warning and Human Resources Directorates. Since its inception, the Committee has focused on building the capacity of the department's staff in the area of WPS. It has organised training on gender mainstreaming, the WPS Legal Frameworks, as well as specific training in Conflict-Related Sexual Violence for the ECOWAS Standby Force (ESF) on mission to Guinea-Bissau and The Gambia. The Committee members have also received training to improve their capacity to support the department.

The aim of these Guidelines is to ensure that all sectors of the PAPS Department, including the ECOWAS Peace Support Operations, incorporate a gender perspective and thus become more inclusive and reflective of the different needs and capacities of women and men of different ages in the ECOWAS region. This will enable the PAPS Department to take greater strides to achieve its core mandate to maintain peace, security and stability in the region.

The present Guidelines are divided into three main sections: the first section explains the WPS agenda and its three main thematic tracks: participation, protection and gender mainstreaming. The second section highlights ECOWAS frameworks and protocols that promote the WPS Agenda in West Africa. The third section delves into ECOWAS' thematic areas of peace and security with specific action points to guide staff on how to ensure their activities adhere to the WPS Agenda in all aspects of their work.

1.1. OBJECTIVE AND AUDIENCE OF THE GUIDELINES

These Guidelines are designed to support PAPS management and other staff to strengthen their implementation of the relevant international and regional frameworks on Women, Peace and Security (WPS). This requires the systematic use of a gender perspective by all staff in all activities to promote both men and women's participation and ensure protection for both women, men, girls and boys from different

backgrounds.

The objectives of these guidelines are to:

• Serve as a one-stop-shop to enhance equal prevention, protection, participation and post-conflict relief and recovery of men and women, and ensure gender mainstreaming in each thematic area of the different PAPS Divisions, Directorates (including the Early Warning Directorate) and Units;

• Enhance the gender-responsive operational capacity of the PAPS Divisions and Directorates, as well as the Early Warning Directorate, with the overall goal of strengthening the implementation of the WPS Agenda;

• Guide the practical gender mainstreaming activities of the different PAPS Divisions, based on all relevant ECOWAS frameworks, protocols and internal procedures.

1.2. CONFLICT AND THE WOMEN, PEACE AND SECURITY AGENDA

While women, men, boys and girls all have to contend with the devastating consequences of war and conflict, the effects and their possibility to respond to it differ based on age and gender. Men are more often directly involved in combat since they are more often frequently drawn either voluntarily or forced into the war as active combatants. They are conscripted into armies, militias and rebel groups and boys constitute the majority of child soldiers. Consequently, men and boys usually constitute a significant percentage of

those who are killed as combatants or injured, which may result in disabilities, as well as psychological trauma. Men and boys are also at a higher risk of being taken as prisoners of war and subjected to torture, which may include sexual violence. Women and girls can also play active roles as fighters or join armed groups, either voluntary or by force, to provide support services such as being spies, cooks and or load carriers. Women and girls associated with armed groups suffer a higher risk of being subjected to sexual violence since they may have to act as wives and sex slaves for the fighters.

Women and girls are more often non-combatants. Thus, they tend to constitute the majority of civilians in conflict, as well as refugees and internally displaced persons. In times of conflict, women are also at risk of dying during childbirth due to their lack of access to hospital care or because of illegal or unsafe abortions resulting from an increase in sexual violence. Due to the absence of men, women must often assume roles as household providers alongside being primary caregivers for children and older family members. Thus, they risk facing disproportionate socio-economic insecurity. Consequently, they may be forced to adopt negative coping mechanisms such as engaging in prostitution, also known as survival sex, or require their daughters to marry too early.

Research shows that gender equality and respect for the rights and dignity of women significantly contribute to peace, social cohesion and security in societies (Melander 2005; Benson and Kugler 1998; Goldstein 2001). Whilst the number of peace agreements with women signatories is still low, the cases studied show a clear correlation between peace agreements signed by female delegates and durable lasting peace. Furthermore, these agreements have a significantly higher number of provisions aimed at political reform, with higher implementation rates of such provisions (Krause, Krause, and Bränfors, 2018).

This positive outcome is connected to the strong links between women signatories and women's civil society groups. This exemplifies the positive impact of the direct participation of women in peace negotiations and the positive trend in implementation (Krause, Krause and Bränfors, 2018). Despite this, a UN Women survey shows that in 31 major peace processes between 1992 and 2011, only 4% of signatories, 2.4% of chief mediators and 9% of negotiators were women (UN Women 2012).

Under the leadership of Namibia and with a strong contribution and activism by African women's groups and regional security institutions, the UN Security Council (UNSC) unanimously adopted Resolution 1325 in October 2000. By the end of 2019, nine additional resolutions had followed in this growing body of international policy. Together they constitute the Women, Peace and Security Agenda. The first resolution in the WPS Agenda is considered a watershed

moment during which the world acknowledged the unique role and active agency of women in the various dimensions of conflict, peace and security.

The resolution states the following:
"Reaffirming the important role of women in the prevention and resolution of conflicts and in peace-building, and stressing the importance of their equal participation and full involvement in all efforts for the maintenance and promotion of peace and security, and the need to increase their role in decision-making with regard to conflict prevention and resolution" (UN/S/Res 1325). UNSCR 1325 (2000) and the subsequent WPS resolutions acknowledge that there is no real peace or security in any setting without women's active inclusion, participation and ownership of the peacebuilding process and that there is a need for a gender perspective in peace and security processes. Furthermore, the resolution was a milestone towards the protection of women and girls from violence in situations of armed conflict, in particular, sexual violence.

The WPS Agenda covers three main thematic tracks:
1.   To ensure and increase women's role and participation in decision-making, conflict prevention and resolution, peacebuilding and peacekeeping operations. This relates to both the representation of women in their diversity, as well as their equal participation in processes. The inclusion of women and their interests in decision-making processes is needed in all areas from prevention, management and resolution of conflicts to the implementation of peace agreements, with women being represented in positions of power. Participation means proactively consulting women, acting upon their contributions and involving women in the design, implementation and monitoring of programmes and projects in peace and security processes. Participation also refers to the involvement of different categories or groups of women, particularly those in local communities, from women's organisations and from different conflicting sides, to avoid a unilateral representation of views and objectives. Participation also relates to preparing and enhancing the agency of women to ensure their effective participation and contribution to peace and security-related activities.

2.   The protection of women and women's rights in armed conflict includes protecting women and girls from Sexual and Gender-Based Violence (SGBV) and other violations of international human rights. Comprehensive and early involvement of women is needed to prevent, mitigate, and respond to the specific needs and risks for women, and to ensure their rights. Protection is about understanding gender-specific vulnerabilities and differential risk factors, as well as specific coping mechanisms and solutions to security and safety concerns. It is about raising awareness and addressing attitudes, practices and behaviours that perpetuate the power inequalities that are the root cause of violence against women and girls. Protection includes providing access to quality services to survivors of SGBV,

including both physical and mental health and ensuring their economic security. It also includes the ending of impunity by prosecuting the perpetrators of conflict-related sexual violence. Thus, the documentation of sexual violence as an international crime and ensuring that it is a core element of peace negotiations and mediation is of utmost importance. Furthermore, sexual violence in conflict should never form part of be included in amnesty provisions.

The need to adopt a gender perspective in conflict prevention, resolution, peacebuilding and peacekeeping i.e. gender mainstreaming in all stages of peace and security processes, in all policies, protocols, directives, frameworks and other stakeholder instruments. This requires a context-specific understanding of how women and men, girls and boys of different ages are affected differently by a conflict, and an understanding of how their needs, aspirations and capacities shape their contribution to peacebuilding. In order to incorporate a gender perspective in all interventions and approaches, all staff, including thematic experts and leadership, must be adequately trained in how to use it in their daily work. All staff, including those deployed on missions, must seize opportunities to promote women's participation and gender equality. This also requires internalising the benefits of gender equality and taking feeling ownership of the importance of it. Gender advisers/experts are key to supporting the gender responsiveness of missions and the technical advisory support provided to Member States. Dedicated leadership, adequate human resources and budgetary allocations are also needed to advance effective gender mainstreaming in organisations.

To date, there are 10 UNSC resolutions constituting the WPS Agenda (see below).

RESOLUTION/YEAR	CORE PROVISIONS
S/RES/1325 (2000)	Addresses the impact of conflict on women and recognises the contribution of women in preventing and resolving conflict, and their role in maintaining international peace and security. Highlights the importance of women's full and equal participation in matters of peace and security; acknowledges women's specific security needs and their right to protection from sexual and gender-based violence and abuse in conflict. It calls for the adoption of a gender perspective in peace negotiations, during the implementation of peace agreements and in all Peacekeeping Operations (PKOs).
S/RES/1820 (2008)	Recognises conflict-related sexual violence as a tactic of war used by warring parties to achieve military or political ends. Focus on protection and strengthened efforts to end Sexual Violence in Conflict

RESOLUTION/YEAR	CORE PROVISIONS
	(SViC) and impunity for these crimes, to ensure adequate support for survivors, the need to exclude these crimes from amnesty provisions and addresses the possibility for sanctions against perpetrators. Requests strengthened efforts to implement the UN policy of zero tolerance for sexual exploitation and abuse and to develop effective guidelines for the protection of civilians, particularly women and children, from sexual violence.
S/RES/1888 (2009)	Reaffirms that sexual violence can exacerbate armed conflict and impede the restoration of peace and security. Calls for more effective implementation of previous resolutions and protection from all forms of sexual violence. Requests the establishment of a Special Representative of the Secretary-General on SViC to provide high-level leadership and the establishment of women's protection advisers in peacekeeping missions. It also highlights the need for regular monitoring and reporting, thorough investigations, and the continued importance of women's participation in all processes.
S/RES/1889 (2009)	Focuses on post-conflict peacebuilding, the need for gender mainstreaming and on women's participation in all stages of peace processes. Highlights the need to increase the participation of women in peace and security governance at all levels, women's empowerment, the importance of specifying the specific needs of women and girls and create global indicators to measure the implementation of UNSCR 1325 (2000).
S/RES/1960 (2010)	Reaffirms the earlier commitments to address SViC and calls for conflicting parties to commit to combating sexual violence. Mandates the creation of tools to combat impunity by listing credibly suspected perpetrators in the Secretary-General's Annual Report, and by establishing monitoring, analysis and reporting arrangements. Also encourages the deployment of more female military and police personnel.

RESOLUTION/YEAR	CORE PROVISIONS
S/RES/2106 (2013)	Reaffirms the necessity to combat impunity and lack of accountability for SViC. Focuses on operationalising current obligations rather than on creating new structures/initiatives and includes language on women's participation and important role in combating sexual violence, while supporting recourse to avenues of justice. Links gender equality/women's empowerment to prevention and protection from sexual violence in conflict. Recognises that sexual violence also affects boys and men, and those who are secondarily traumatised as survivors and forced witnesses.
S/RES/2122 (2013)	Emphasises the need for timely information and analysis about the impact of war on girls and women and identifies UN Women as one of the key UN entities providing information and advice on the participation of women in peace and security governance. Stresses the importance of the inclusion of and support for women's civil society organisations. In addition to a high-level review of the implementation of UNSCR 1325, it sets out concrete methods for combating the deficit in women's participation, such as recognising the need to address the root causes of armed conflict and security risks faced by women. Furthermore, it calls for the provision of multi-sectoral services to women affected by conflict, linking disarmament to gender equality, and the need to increase the number of women, as well as gender expertise, in all mediation teams.
S/RES/2242 (2015)	Focuses on women's participation, particularly in conflict prevention and mediation. Integrates WPS in all UNSC country situations and establishes an Informal Expert Group on WPS. It highlights the need to add a gender perspective and WPS considerations to sanction committee deliberations and links WPS to Countering Violent Extremism/Counterterrorism (CVE/CT), highlighting women's role in preventing radicalisation. Encourages the assessment of strategies and resources with regard to the implementation of the WPS Agenda; highlights the importance of collaboration with civil society; calls for increased funding for gender-responsive training, analysis and programmes and the integration of gender as a cross-cutting issue in CVE/CT agendas. Also highlights the importance of engaging boys and men in promoting women's participation.

RESOLUTION/YEAR	CORE PROVISIONS
S/RES/2467 (2019)	Recognises sexual violence in conflict as a continuum of recurrent forms of violence against women and girls and that empowering women is necessary to counter its root causes. Calls for conflicting parties around the world to put an immediate end to sexual violence, to prevent such acts from happening in the future, and introduces accountability measures for perpetrators of sexual violence. It calls for the implementation of effective support measures for survivors of sexual violence and states, if pregnancy is a result, the need to grant equal rights for the survivor and the child. Also links sexual violence to the illicit trade in natural resources.
S/RES/2493 (2019)	Focuses on the full implementation of all previous WPS resolutions and ongoing work on a regional, national and local level. Calls for Member States to promote women's rights; encourages the creation of safe operational environments for civil society and human rights defenders working to promote women's rights, and increase the participation of women in all processes related to peace and security, including through the mainstreaming of a gender perspective.

1.3.   WOMEN, PEACE AND SECURITY IN WEST AFRICA

The WPS Agenda is a global framework that requires action on all levels from multiple stakeholders. Regional organisations are recognised as key actors for the effective delivery of the Agenda, as they have the political authority and platform to mobilise Member States to adopt and implement its provisions. Since its adoption, the African Union (AU) and its Regional Economic Communities (RECs) including ECOWAS, the Southern Africa Development Community, the Economic Community of Central African States, the Intergovernmental Agency for Development and the East Africa Economic Community have developed several policies and strategies to implement the WPS Agenda. Coordination of these efforts should be encouraged.

In West Africa, women have contributed to mitigating the effects of conflict and proactively helped build peace in countries such as Liberia, Sierra Leone and La Côte d'Ivoire. However, many of these efforts are overlooked, trivialised as informal processes and consequently ignored. Yet, acknowledging the persistent marginalisation of women is fundamental to the successful implementation of the WPS Agenda in West Africa. The gendered

inequalities that deny women and girls their rights in the region have been sustained by a patriarchal system, that is derived from political structures, poverty, cultures and traditions. Consequently, there are fewer women in leadership positions at all levels. While the region was able to produce one female head of state in Liberia in 2005 (Ellen Johnson Sirleaf), it has not been replicated since. The current number of female representatives in Parliament in the region is also low, such as Niger 17%, Togo 18.7%, Liberia 12.3%, Sierra Leone 12.3%, Mali 27.9% and Nigeria 3.6%. However, one country has made significant progress, as further described in box 4: 42% of Senegalese Members of Parliament are women.

BOX 2: RESOLUTIONS REFERRING TO THE ROLE OF REGIONAL ORGANISATIONS

The different UNSCRs call regional organisations to proactively advance the WPS Agenda:

Resolution 1325 (2000): Urges Member States to ensure increased representation of women at all decision-making levels in national, regional and international institutions and mechanisms for the prevention, management and resolution of conflict (§1).

Resolution 1820 (2008): Urges the appropriate regional and sub-regional bodies to consider developing and implementing policies, activities and advocacy for the benefit of women and girls affected by sexual violence in armed conflict (§14).

Resolution 1888 (2009): Urges the Secretary-General, Member States and the heads of regional organisations to take measures to increase the representation of women in mediation and decision-making processes with regard to conflict resolution and peacebuilding (§16).

Resolution 1889 (2009): Urges Member States and international and regional organisations to take further measures to improve women's participation in all stages of peace processes, particularly in conflict resolution, post-conflict planning and peacebuilding, including by enhancing their engagement in political and economic decision-making in the early stages of recovery processes, through inter alia promoting women's leadership and capacity to engage in aid management and planning, supporting women's organisations, and countering negative societal attitudes about women's capacity to participate equally (§1).

Resolution 2106 (2013): Reiterates the importance of addressing sexual violence in armed conflict whenever relevant, in mediation efforts, ceasefires and peace agreements; requests the Secretary-General, Member States and regional organisations, where appropriate, to ensure that mediators and envoys [...] engage on sexual violence issues, including with women, civil society,

women's organisations and survivors of sexual violence, and ensure that such concerns are reflected in specific provisions of peace agreements, including those related to security arrangements and transitional justice mechanisms.(§12)

Resolution 2122 (2013): Further notes with concern that without a significant shift in implementation, women and women's perspectives will continue to be underrepresented in conflict prevention, resolution, protection and peacebuilding for the foreseeable future. Thus, the resolution encourages those Member States, regional organisations, where appropriate, and UN entities [...] to start reviewing existing implementation plans and targets (§15).

Resolution 2242 (2015): Calls upon Member States, United Nations entities, intergovernmental, regional and sub-regional organisations to take into consideration the specific impact of conflict and post-conflict environments on women's and girls' security, mobility, education, economic activity and opportunities, to mitigate the risk of women becoming active players in the illicit transfer of small arms and light weapons (§15).

Resolution 2493 (2019): Encourages regional organisations [...] to identify practical and measurable steps for fully implementing the agenda and invites them to report on this their progress during the annual open debate of the Security Council (§8).

1.4   How the WPS Agenda Relates to ECOWAS

ECOWAS promotes peace and security in the region, and supports the introduction and consolidation of democratic systems, conflict prevention, Security Sector Reform (SSR) and peacebuilding engagement. In its role as first responder for peace and security in the West African region, ECOWAS is accountable for the implementation of the WPS Agenda. At a Regional Forum organised by ECOWAS on 17 September 2010 in Senegal titled "Women Count for Peace", the Commission adopted the Dakar Declaration on the Implementation of UN Security Council

 Resolution 1325" and its related Regional Action Plan (RAP) for the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS). The time frame for the implementation of the RAP was 2010 to 2013, and was reviewed in 2013. In addition to this a WPS-Action Plan was developed as a component of the ECOWAS Conflict Prevention Framework (ECPF) 2018 – 2020.

West Africa is now the region with the highest concentration of countries that have adopted the National Action Plans (NAPs) on WPS (13 out of 15 states). However, more can be done to ensure adequate representation, meaningful participation and comprehensive protection of women

and girls in peace and security work and gender mainstreaming of all processes that ultimately contribute to sustainable peace in the region.

ECOWAS Gender-Relevant Frameworks and Policies:

The efforts to implement the WPS Agenda in the West African region build on a body of gender-specific policies and frameworks developed by ECOWAS. These policies and frameworks include:

ECOWAS POLICY DOCUMENTS	RELEVANCE FOR WPS
Revised ECOWAS Treaty (1993)	Article 63: Expresses the need for policies and mechanisms to enhance the economic, social and cultural conditions for women, the incorporation of women's concerns and needs, and removal of the constraints for women's contribution to regional development initiatives.
The ECOWAS 1999 Protocol Relating to the Mechanism on Conflict Prevention, Management, Resolution, Peacekeeping and Security	**Article 3. (d, e, g, h) The objectives of the Mechanism are to:** • Reinforce cooperation in the domains of conflict prevention, early warning, PKOs, combating trans-border crimes, proliferation of small arms and antipersonnel mines. • Promote close cooperation among Member States in the area of preventive diplomacy and peacekeeping. • Maintain and consolidate peace and stability within the community. • Establish and deploy, if need be, a civilian and military force for maintaining peace or restoring peace in the region. **Article 20.1 emphasise:** • The need to include women in the list of eminent personalities who serve as mediators, conciliators, and facilitators for ECOWAS. **Article 40.4 states:** • ECOWAS shall recognise, encourage and support the role of women in its initiatives for conflict prevention, management, resolution, peacekeeping and security.
Plan of Action for the implementation of UNSCRs 1325 and 1820 (2010)	The ECOWAS first Plan of Action for the Implementation of UNSCRs 1325 and 1820 was adopted in Dakar, Senegal in September 2010, during the celebration of the 10th Anniversary of UNSCR 1325 (2000).

ECOWAS POLICY DOCUMENTS	RELEVANCE FOR WPS
	The Dakar Declaration lays out ECOWAS' ten key action points around the pillar of the WPS Agenda: • Participation (promote women's participation; popularise resolution 1325). • Protection (strengthen measures to combat SGBV). • Prevention (strengthen preventive diplomacy; promote the development of a culture of peace by drawing on women's traditional role as mediators and educators; strengthen early warning mechanisms; encourage research and documentation of lessons learned), and • Relief and recovery (provision of adequate and accessible humanitarian services; strengthen post-incident relief measures; strengthen socio-economic reintegration measures.
Action Plan for Women Peace and Security Component of the ECOWAS Conflict Prevention Framework (ECPF) 2017 – 2020	T**he Women, Peace and Security component is expected to deliver on three main outcomes:** • Leadership and engagement of women in national and regional institutions and mechanisms for prevention, management, and resolution of conflict in West Africa increased. • Women's role and contribution in conflict prevention, resolution, peacebuilding, and humanitarian initiatives in West Africa strengthened. • Women playing a more active role in peace operations as troops, police, and civilian staff, with gender parity mainstreamed in decision-making, planning and implementation of ECOWAS PSOs and a resultant reduction in incidences ECPF Plans of Action.
Supplementary Protocol on Democracy and Good Governance (2001)	Articles 40 and 43 call for the development and promotion of women's welfare, which are seen as essential factors for development, progress and peace in society, and the elimination of all forms of discrimination and harmful and degrading practices against women.

DOCUMENTS ECOWAS POLICY	RELEVANCE FOR WPS
Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Right on the rights of Women in Africa (2003)	Articles 10 &11 call for the right to peace and the protection of women in armed conflicts.
Decision A/DEC. 1/01/05 Relating to the adoption of the ECOWAS Gender Policy and all its Implementation Instruments	The vision is to have a "just and safe West African society in which men and women enjoy equal opportunities to participate, make decisions, have control over and benefit from all development interventions".
ECOWAS Conflict Prevention Framework (ECPF) (2008)	Component 10 aims to propel and consolidate women's roles and contribution to the design, elaboration, implementation and evaluation of conflict prevention, resolution, peacebuilding and humanitarian initiatives, while strengthening regional and national mechanisms for the protection and advancement of women.
ECOWAS Standby Force Doctrine (2016)	The doctrine calls for gender considerations and equality in all ECOWAS protocols, declarations and agreements. The Peace Support Operation Division (PSOD) should leverage on this institutional framework to ensure that the principles of gender equality espoused in UN Security Council Resolution 1325 and other related gender architecture permeate the planning and execution of Peace Support Operations (PSOs). This means that PSOs should ensure the participation of women and men as equal partners and beneficiaries in all aspects of the peace process. The AU Peace and Security Council emphasises "the protection of non-combatants' basic right to life and dignity as a fundamental element of all peace operations". The growing importance of the protection of civilians also makes the needs and rights of women and children in armed conflict visible.
Code of Conduct for ESF Personnel (2019)	The section on the "professional working environment" states that ECOWAS Standby Forces (ESF) personnel shall abstain from any actions which may be contrary to the ESF Policy on the professional

DOCUMENTS ECOWAS POLICY	RELEVANCE FOR WPS
	working environment. Personnel must treat colleagues equally and with respect, regardless of gender, race, religion or belief, nationality, ethnic or social origin, age, sexual orientation, marital status, or other aspects of personal status. There is also an emphasis on the need to develop systems, mechanisms, and procedures for ensuring that PSO personnel throughout the world uphold the highest standards of conduct in executing their mandate, as well as in their interaction with host communities.
ESF Conduct and Discipline Policy Framework (2019)	The framework calls for the development of a welfare and recreation policy for all categories of its staff, particularly in PSOs and missions. It states that ESF shall include welfare and gender officers in their PSO to assist in integrating gender mainstreaming and welfare improvements across the mission.
ECOWAS Human Resources Policy Framework for Recruitment, Deployment and Management of Civilian Personnel in PSOs (2019)	Regarding the representation of women and men, the framework refers to the following: Gender Representation: Recognising in 2000 UNSC Resolution 1325, the "impact of armed conflicts on women and their potential to contribute to all processes that aim to sustain peace", the UN has adopted a number of policy directives advising, inter alia, on the "adoption of gender sensitive policies which support the increased recruitment and deployment of women to Peacekeeping Operations" on both military and civilian levels. Subsequently, most regional and sub-regional institutions have adopted similar policies. However, progress remains slow and there is much that needs to be done to increase the representation of professional women in the civilian components of PSOs, including at the highest level of the management.

1.5. STRATEGY FOR GENDER MAINSTREAMING IN ECOWAS

The 1993 ECOWAS Revised Treaty adopted by Member States and specifically Article 63 on Women and Development directs the ECOWAS Commission to formulate, harmonise, coordinate and establish appropriate policies and mechanisms for the enhancement of the economic, social and cultural rights of women in West Africa. This drove the decision to transform the West African Women's Association (WAWA) into the ECOWAS Gender Development Centre (EGDC), to set up an ECOWAS Technical Commission on gender and to adopt the ECOWAS Gender Policy in 2005 in order to provide the legal, institutional and policy frameworks to gender mainstream the regional integration agenda. Additionally, the establishment of a WPS Unit with the Department of Social Affairs and Gender has further helped to strengthen the Commission's bid to gender mainstream all work.

In order to adequately implement the WPS Agenda, ECOWAS should commit to a process of gender mainstreaming in planning, designing and implementing any intervention, including follow-up and evaluation. It is important for the leadership of the Commission to take ownership of the process and ensure that existing gender policies and the present guidelines are systematically implemented. Gender mainstreaming is a win-win strategy and will benefit all mandates ultimately contributing to more lasting results. The current lack of implementation is limiting the effectiveness of the Commission when carrying out its mandate in the region.

All staff members should always integrate a gender perspective in their work and ensure that men, women, boys and girls are not discriminated against and will equally benefit from the implementation of the ECOWAS mandate. This should be achieved through staff members conducting gender analysis and making the appropriate adjustments throughout in their work. Factors such as 1) accountable leadership in promoting gender mainstreaming, 2) quality of gender analysis, 3) availability of an effective gender focal point system and 4) effective coordination and collaboration among relevant actors with gender expertise, are key to strengthening gender mainstreaming in all activities undertaken.

Accountable Leadership

The leadership is accountable for gender mainstreaming in the work of the different units of PAPS. While managers are not expected to be gender experts, they are expected to use the gender expertise within the Commission, including additional support functions as the gender focal points, in a strategic way to strengthen gender mainstreaming in activities of PAPS. Effective gender mainstreaming often requires a process of organisational change and leadership in order to provide the direction and support needed. Gender mainstreaming concerns both women and men and requires the commitment and participation of all staff. Management at various levels plays a key role in implementing the ECOWAS Gender Policy and the WPS Agenda in the region. It is recommended that a specific and substantial training course on WPS should be made available to senior leadership and that demonstrated knowledge of the WPS agenda

should be a requirement for promotion to senior positions, accompanied by a discussion about their commitment to implementing effective gender mainstreaming.

The former Ambassador of Sweden to Nigeria and ECOWAS, Mrs. Inger Ultvedt, and Gen. Francis Awagbe Behanzin @ the Training of PAPS Management Staff on Gender Mainstreaming and the Women, Peace and Security Agenda, 4 May 2018.

Gender Analysis

Gender mainstreaming is to be included in all phases of the cycle of operations, i.e. analysis, planning, implementation, reporting, monitoring and evaluation. In each of these phases there is a need to ensure that the situation/perspectives of women, men, boys, and girls are considered, as well as the impact of the projected and/or concluded actions on each of these groups. Effective gender mainstreaming starts with a gender analysis.

Gender analysis is a tool for understanding the social and power dynamics between women, men, girls and boys within a given context, and to identify gender inequality. The analysis assists in detecting different needs and opportunities based on gender. This starts with integrating a gender perspective when collecting information, facts and sex-disaggregated data. In order to collect such information, it is also necessary to consider the composition of the team and the target audience.

Sex-disaggregated data is a key element of gender analysis to help ECOWAS staff detect gender inequalities. Gender analysis should also include a qualitative analysis of, for example, laws, norms and social attitudes. A good starting point is to find out who does what, where and when and who has access to and controls which resources (for example, influence, status, information, time, legal support and security).

Gender analysis should also ascertain factors such as access to, inclusion in and participation of women and men in issues related to peace and security. Key questions that could be asked during gender analysis in relation to inclusion and participation are presented in the box below.

INCLUSION	PARTICIPATION
• Are both women and men included? • What are the percentages of women and men included? • Were both men and women included from the design stage of the process/activity? • Which sub-groups of women and men are included? • What has been the tradition in relation to the inclusion of women and men in activities? • What have been some of the challenges related to the inclusion of women? • Which factors promote the inclusion of women and men? • What specific activities have been undertaken to ensure that both men and women are included? • Which laws and policies promote the inclusion of women and girls in decision-making processes?	• Are the needs and interests of both women and men addressed in the process? • What are the different roles of women and men in the process/activity? • Which sub-groups of women and men participate? • Who talks during meetings? • Whose information is regarded as valuable? What policies and procedures promote equal participation of both women and men? • Do women perform leadership roles? If so, which? • How do we ensure that women and men are respected when they participate? • Are there mechanisms in place to address unconscious biases and stereotypes? • Are there training programmes on promoting equal participation for both women and men? If so, which?

Gender Focal Point system

In order to support managers and other leadership structures in the gender mainstreaming process, many organisations and agencies such as the UN, EU, and AU have established departmental networks of gender focal points. The gender focal points represent the various units or smaller entities within the organisation and have dual roles. They are subject-matter experts or desk officers who have been trained in gender mainstreaming and serve as a support structure in the department. Their objective is to help improve their unit's work on gender mainstreaming by providing thematic support to leadership and colleagues, guide their gender analysis and support the implementation of activities to adhere to the WPS Agenda.

Gender focal points should have a sufficient level of seniority; have clear work descriptions that are known to their colleagues and sufficient time and resources to carry out their task. Taking on the extra responsibility of being a gender focal point should be professionally rewarding. The leadership should support its network of gender focal points in carrying out their work.

In 2017, PAPS took the decision to create a Women, Peace and Security Advisory Committee comprising staff members from

different directorates, thereby serving as a de facto Gender Focal Point system. The Committee members have been trained and have a good understanding of how gender structures impact men and women differently and how to conduct gender analysis. Their mandate is to support their colleagues in the PAPS and ERW Divisions to strengthen their adherence to the WPS Agenda in their work. According to their Terms of Reference (TOR), they are mandated to:

• Systematically facilitate the mainstreaming of a gender perspective in the programmes and activities of the PAPS Department.
• Develop the internal and external capabilities of the PAPS Department to integrate a gender perspective and conduct gender analysis in its work.
• Support the implementation of all relevant international and regional frameworks that promote the WPS Agenda.

Effective Coordination

Effective coordination and collaboration among relevant actors with gender expertise are key to strengthening gender mainstreaming in all activities undertaken. Members of the PAPS WPS Committee are not thematic experts on gender mainstreaming and may require advice from a gender expert and/or adviser. In ECOWAS, such expertise lies with the Department of Social Affairs and Gender and the Gender Development Centre (Dakar, Senegal), which is an ECOWAS specialised agency charged with contributing to gender equality and women's empowerment in the ECOWAS region.

The mandate of the Centre reads: "Transforming West Africa into a fair and safe community in which men and women have equal opportunities to participate, decide, control and take advantage of all development initiatives" and to "work with Member States for the effective implementation of the ECOWAS Gender Policy" (2005). The PAPS WPS committee is a pilot initiative that could be replicated in all ECOWAS departments with the support of the Department of Social Affairs and Gender.

ECOWAS Women, Peace and Security Strategy Meeting Dakar, Senegal, 15–16 February 2018
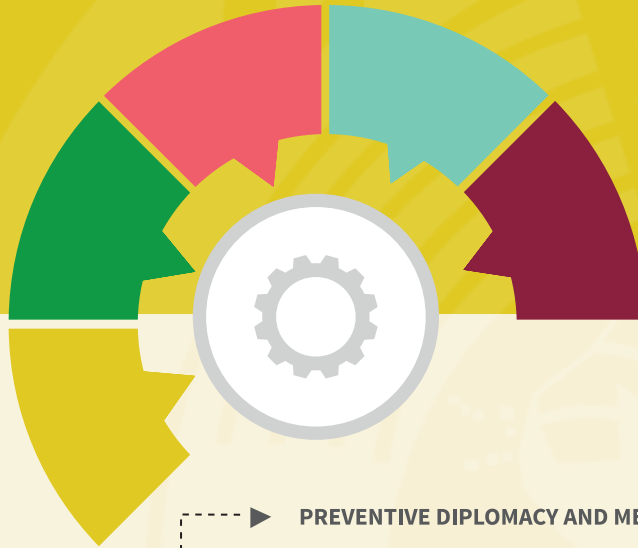
DEPARTMENT OF POLITICAL AFFAIRS, PEACE AND SECURITY

▶ **PREVENTIVE DIPLOMACY AND MEDIATION**

▶ **GOVERNANCE AND ELECTORAL ASSISTANCE**

▶ **MULTILATERAL POLITICAL ENGAGEMENT**

▶ **HUMAN RIGHTS AND RULE OF LAW**

▶ **PEACEKEEPING AND REGIONAL SECURITY DIRECTORATE**

▶ **PEACE SUPPORT OPERATIONS**

▶ **SECURITY GOVERNANCE**

▶ **SMALL ARMS AND LIGHT WEAPONS CONTROL**

▶ **EARLY WARNING**

2. DEPARTMENT OF POLITICAL AFFAIRS, PEACE AND SECURITY

PAPS is one of the thirteen departments in ECOWAS and has a leading role in promoting peace, security and stability in the region. It was principally set up to facilitate the "implementation of the protocol relating to the Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management Resolution, Peacekeeping and Security of 1999 as well as the Supplementary Protocol on Democracy and Good Governance, including the ECOWAS Conflict Prevention Framework (ECPF)". It has two directorates, the Political Affairs and the Peacekeeping and Regional Security Directorates, comprising several Divisions working on thematic areas. These are presented and analysed in the sections below.

As the lead department working on issues related to peace and security in ECOWAS, PAPS established the WPS Advisory Committee to enable it to effectively implement the provisions of the WPS Agenda. The guidance in the sections below is meant to strengthen the activities of the respective directorates and divisions in PAPS as they carry out their roles and responsibilities. The intention is to maximise the quality of outputs delivered by the department, thereby building on already existing guidance on gender mainstreaming in the department.

Even though the Early Warning Directorate of ECOWAS is located in the Office of the Vice President, a section on Early Warning is included in these guidelines to illustrate the link between ECOWAS' Early Warning and Response structures. This illustrates the need for an integrated approach to the work of PAPS and other departments and divisions within ECOWAS to effectively gender mainstream all its activities and implement the WPS Agenda.

2.1. DIRECTORATE OF POLITICAL AFFAIRS OF ECOWAS

The Directorate of Political Affairs (DPA) plays a vital role in promoting good governance, democracy and stability in the West Africa region. It aims to ensure that existing and emerging challenges are addressed, and that mechanisms to develop the resilience of states in the region are strengthened. The DPA is responsible for coordinating and servicing the work of the Mediation and Security Council (MSC) at Ambassadorial, Ministerial and Heads of State levels, as well as high-level bilateral and multilateral political meetings with external partners such as the AU, other RECs, the UN and the EU.

The Directorate primarily works around four core components: 1) Preventive Diplomacy and Mediation 2) Elections and Political Governance and Electoral Assistance 3) Multilateral Political Engagement, and 4) Political Governance and Human Rights. The WPS Agenda is fundamental to all these areas.

2.1.1. PREVENTIVE DIPLOMACY AND MEDIATION

Since its establishment, ECOWAS has been consistently involved in preventing and resolving conflicts in the region. After the start of the civil war in Liberia in 1989, ECOWAS adopted a more proactive approach to preventive diplomacy. Since this time, it has continued to engage in preventive diplomacy and mediation as part of its conflict prevention, mitigation and resolution strategy, in line with its Protocol on Conflict Prevention, Management, Resolution, Peacekeeping and Security (1999), the Supplementary Protocol on Democracy and Good Governance (2001), as well as the ECOWAS Conflict Prevention Framework (2008). With the creation of the Mediation

Facilitation Division (MFD) in the DPA in 2015, efforts have been made to prioritise gender mainstreaming in preventive diplomacy and mediation. Relevant policy provisions include the commitment to gender mainstreaming in mediation (principle 8) in the ECOWAS Mediation Guidelines (2018), the reservation of at least 30% of female representation in the composition of the ECOWAS Council of the Wise (CoW), as outlined in Article 2 (5) of the Council's 2016 Statute. These policies are complemented by a commissioned assessment study on Gender inclusivity and effective mediation processes in West Africa (2019).

Specifically, key challenges in adhering to the WPS Agenda in ECOWAS' preventive diplomacy and mediation include:

- Under-representation of women in high level and formal mediation spaces (high-level mediators, facilitators and special envoys), due to the limited political will within the leadership of ECOWAS and Member States to ensure a gender-balanced nomination process of mediators, facilitators or special envoys in peace processes.
- A tendency to equate the under-representation of women in mediation with a lack of women's skills and capacities. Training in mediation skills may be beneficial to both women and men but do not automatically lead to participation in a peace process.
- Cultural barriers and gender stereotyping of the role of women and men are not accurately acknowledged and acted upon.
- Lack of gender analysis of different conflicts in the region.
- Limited gender-responsive budgeting in ECOWAS' own funding streams.

- Support for gender mainstreaming in mediation processes is mostly donor driven.

In relation to Preventive Diplomacy and Mediation, the WPS Agenda calls for:

Increasing the formal representation of women: The WPS Agenda calls for concrete measures to increase the representation of women in mediation and decision-making processes regarding conflict prevention, resolution and peacebuilding (S/RES/1888 (2009), §16). Furthermore, it stresses the need to appropriately appoint women at decision-making levels, comprising roles as high-level mediators, and within mediator teams (S/RES/1889 (2009)). Subsequent resolutions also call on all parties to peace talks to facilitate the equal and full participation of women at all decision-making levels (S/RES/ 2122 (2013), §7c).

Meaningful participation of women requires adequate funding and training: The WPS Agenda calls for the provision of financial and technical assistance to women involved in peace processes, including training in mediation, advocacy and technical areas of negotiation, as well as providing support and training to mediators and technical teams on the impact of women's participation and strategies on women's effective inclusion (S/RES/2242 (2015), §1).

Early engagement to end sexual violence is crucial for success: The WPS Agenda emphasises that early engagement is needed in order to effectively combat sexual violence from the outset of peace processes and mediation efforts (S/RES/1888 (2009)). Consequently, an explicit reference to conflict-related sexual violence needs to be

included in the mandates of diverse missions and deployment, including "peacekeeping and political mandates, public statements, country visits, fact-finding missions, international commissions of inquiry, consultations with regional bodies and in the work of relevant Security Council sanctions committees" (S/RES/2106 (2013) §5).

Concrete and explicit inclusion of sexual violence in agreements: The WPS Agenda calls for the explicit inclusion of conflict-related sexual violence in preliminary and final agreements in order to increase the likelihood of effective implementation. Reference is made to pre-ceasefire humanitarian access and human rights agreements, ceasefires and ceasefire monitoring, Disarmament, Demobilisation and Reintegration (DDR), Security Sector Reform (SSR) arrangements, justice and reparations, post-conflict recovery and development (S/RES/1888 (2009) §17).

Box 3: Women's Participation in Preventive Diplomacy and Mediation in West Africa

Women's groups form an integral part of the West Africa Civil Society Forum, which serves to channel the experiences of civil society groups in conflict prevention and mediation at the Track II level, complementing ECOWAS' efforts to ensure peace and security.

One such group is the Mano River Women's Peace Network (MARWOPNET), which was involved in the peace processes in Liberia, Sierra Leone and Guinea. MARWOPNET, a network of diverse high-level and grassroots women's organisations, was formed in 2000 in Abuja under the auspices of ECOWAS. It was established at a time when the conflicts in the respective countries intensified and there was a need to gain access to peace actors who would facilitate an end to the atrocities. When women were not invited to the Accra Peace Talks on Liberia in June 2003, MARWOPNET acted as a pressure group, mobilising other women and groups in their communities to appeal to the warring parties to stop fighting and agree to the negotiated settlements of disputes. The women's groups also put pressure on stakeholders in order to involve them in the peace process. The efforts of the women's groups (including the Liberia Women's Initiative) were recognised during the Accra Peace Talks on Liberia and MARWOPNET was officially invited as the only women's group to participate with observer status at the talks.

Nicholas Okai et al. 2014. Mediating Conflict in West Africa: An Overview of Regional Experiences KAIPTC, Accra, Ghana.

Action Points:
- Apply the existing gender-sensitive early warning indicators to guide the assessment of the situation in Member States.
- Ensure that the mandates of the diplomatic mission and mediation teams have provisions relating to the differential impact of the conflict on women and men, including conflict-related sexual violence. Ensure that these provisions are put on the agenda in mediation, negotiation and dialogue efforts.

- Condition parties to the peace process to ensure that both men and women are participating. Establish a minimum 30% quota if needed.
- Develop and maintain a database of prominent women and men who are adequately trained to understand the importance of gender equality to engage in Track One preventive diplomacy. Until gender parity is achieved, a proactive effort should be made to identify women in the region who have served in prominent government and non-governmental roles.
- To the extent possible, ensure that mission teams comprise both men and women from different backgrounds relevant to the conflict. A more mixed team will be able to have a more holistic understanding of the conflict or crisis.
- Identify, recruit and provide training and other capacity building programmes such as mentoring, exchange programmes and study tours for women on mediation and negotiation. It is also necessary to develop or identify strategies on how to break down the cultural barriers and norms relating to peace processes, which are often the main challenges for women to access the negotiation table.
- Conduct training on gender equality, women's participation and protection issues/aspects, including gender analysis, as part of the preparation of team members deployed in preventive diplomacy and mediation missions.
- Develop a code of conduct for mission teams to ensure that deployed women are not side-lined or harassed while on a mission. Prior to the mission, train staff on the content of the code of conduct and the disciplinary mechanisms and consequences if the code of conduct is neglected.
- Where feasible, ensure that gender experts are part of mission teams to provide technical assistance to those undertaking preventive diplomacy and mediation. This will go a long way in ensuring that activities undertaken are gender responsive. Please note that a female colleague, while maybe skilled, is not automatically a gender expert and cannot be assumed to fill that role.
- Debrief team members after deployment on concrete measures taken in engagement with both women and men and how protection issues were addressed. Ensure that summary reports are gender mainstreamed and adhere to the relevant WPS resolutions.
- Explore and broaden the communication channels and partnerships between mediation teams and national women's networks and women's groups, including the 50/50 group of Sierra Leone, the Mano River Women Peace building Network (MARWOPNET), as already mentioned, the Network of African Women in Conflict Prevention and Mediation (FemWise-Africa), Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF), Network on Peace and Security for Women in the ECOWAS Region (NOPSWECO) and the Women in Peacebuilding Network (WIPNET).

2.1.2. GOVERNANCE AND ELECTORAL ASSISTANCE

The promotion of democratic governance is among one of the key activities that the Political Affairs Directorate works on in the region. It supports Member States in developing and implementing laws and policies promoting inclusive political participation, strengthening internal party democracy through training and other engagements and supporting Member States to decentralise power and services so that they are accessible to local communities.

ECOWAS Member States have ratified its Good Governance Protocol, which emphasises that accession to power is only acceptable when carried out through democratically conducted elections. The gender aspects of election processes relate to the representation of women in political structures and decision-making bodies at national and local levels. Deep-rooted constraints undermine women's ability to run for office.

These include traditional belief systems that reject women's leadership, limited educational opportunities for girls, limited (independent) economic means, as well as intimidation and the use of violence during elections. This has resulted in a pattern of under-representation of women in elected positions. In addition, female voters also face constraints due to lack of safety, limited access to information, or are pressured into voting in accordance with the preferences of a husband or male relative.
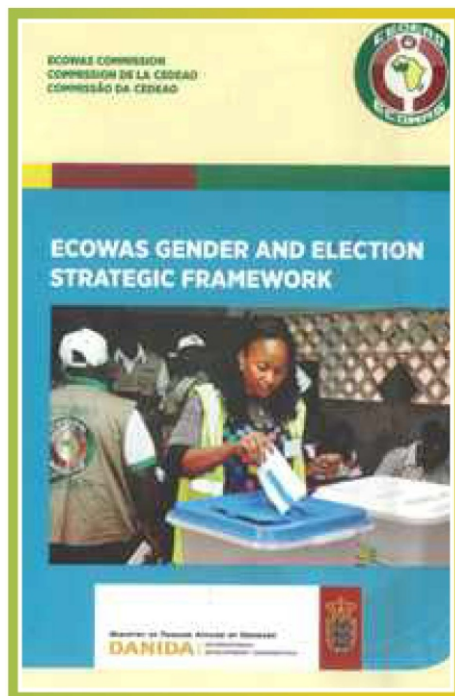
The Proportional Representation (PR) electoral system is generally considered favourable to the fair representation of women. Numerous studies, backed by aggregate level cross-national comparisons, have indicated that it is in countries with proportional or mixed systems only that women's representation has reached over 30% of MPs (Curtin, 2003: 49). In West Africa, the two leading countries for women's representation in the region are Senegal and Cape Verde, both of which have some elements of PR. The Republic of Senegal passed its Gender Parity Law in 2010, which is based on a quota system to enhance women's participation in politics; and the Republic of

Cape Verde approved its Parity Law in 2018; also, Guinea developed and approved a Parity Law in 2019. In contrast, the electoral systems that have proved to be less favourable to the fair representation of women in the world is the majoritarian system, which is used by over half of the ECOWAS Member States.

Election-related violence influences the conduct of voters and candidates and distorts the election results. Moreover, research has revealed that the occurrence of SGBV usually increases during elections. For instance, in Sierra Leone (2007, 2018) and in Guinea (2009), members of the respective opposition parties were attacked, with women reporting being raped. This serves as a powerful deterrent for other women to enter politics, as well as undermining general voter turn-out.

The ECOWAS Gender and Elections Strategic Framework (GESF) and Action Plan in 2016, followed by the Supplementary Act relating to Equality of Rights between Men and Women for Sustainable Development in the ECOWAS Region, comprise concrete measures to increase women's participation in elections. However, these frameworks must be transformed into concrete actions. PAPS should use gender-responsive electoral legal frameworks to design and implement specific training and support for Member States and civil society.

In relation to governance and election processes, the WPS Agenda calls for:

Increased representation of women in decision-making processes: The WPS Agenda urges Member States to ensure the increased representation of women at all decision-making levels in national, regional and international institutions and mechanisms for the prevention, management and resolution of conflict (S/RES/1325 (2000), § 1).

Protection of and respect for the human rights of women and girls: The WPS Agenda calls for the protection of and respect for the human rights of women and girls, particularly as they relate to the constitution, the electoral system, the police and the judiciary (S/RES/1325 (2000), § 8c). In particular, women's full and equal participation is required at all phases of electoral processes, including post-conflict electoral processes and constitutional reforms. Importantly, specific attention must be paid to women's safety prior to and during elections (S/RES/2122 (2013), § 8).

Election preparation to contribute to women's participation: The WPS Agenda draws attention to election preparation and political processes to facilitate women's full and effective participation (S/RES/2467 (2019), §23). Furthermore, the appointment of gender advisers and/or women protection advisers will permit the introduction of concrete measures that ensure the protection of women before, during and after electoral processes (S/RES/2493 (2019) §10b).

Box 4: Notable Example: Senegal's Law on Parity 2010

Senegal succeeded in passing a Law (2010-11 Act of May 28, 2010) on parity between men and women in all partially or entirely elected institutions. Being of mandatory characters, articles 1 and 2 of the law stipulate: "all lists of candidates shall be alternately composed of persons of both sexes, and when the total number is odd, parity shall apply up to the last even number. All lists of candidates shall comply with this provision or shall be rejected" (President Abdoulaye Wade's decree 2011-819 of 19 May 2011). This list shall be applied to lists of candidates and political parties are to proactively enforce the provisions of the Act on the absolute parity between men and women. Significant progress has been made since 2010. The number of female MPs increased from 22.7% to 42.7% in 2012 and the number of female representatives in local councils increased from 16% to 47% in 2014. Currently, Senegal has 43% female MPs, which is by far the highest in West Africa.

Source: The Trans-Saharan Elections Project, University of Florida. https://tsep.africa.ufl.edu/gender-quotas-and-representation/senegal/

Action Points:
Mainstreaming Gender in Governance:
- Provide tailor-made technical support to Member States to develop and enforce laws and affirmative policies and actions that will promote gender mainstreaming in government institutions.
- Monitor the ratio of women and men in the parliaments of Member States. Publish it on an annual basis to track the Member States' commitment to the WPS Agenda and identify where they require additional engagement and support from ECOWAS.
- Support strengthening the capacity of the relevant government institutions through training and other initiatives to enable them to gender mainstream all their activities.
- Support leading government agencies in driving the development and implementation of the national action plans on Women, Peace and Security, to avoid them simply becoming an add-on or a separate activity under the Ministry of Gender and/or Women's Affairs.

Supporting women candidates and preparing women to run for office:
- Develop the capacity of National Electoral Commissions, other regulating bodies and political parties to understand gender inequality through tailored training that addresses barriers to women running for office and elected positions.
- Provide technical advice to political parties to improve on rules and regulations when nominating candidates in order to ensure gender parity. Support women in leadership roles in political parties and ensure that women can also reach top-level positions.
- In ECOWAS' engagement with Member States and the ECOWAS Network of Electoral

Commissions (ECONEC), ensure that state authorities commit to protecting women and girls during election processes to mitigate the risks of intimidation and violence while running for office or trying to access a polling station

- Support initiatives such as quota systems or affirmative actions aimed at strengthening the participation of women in politics, which is proving to be effective, and which can be seen in Senegal.
- Back the initiatives of female parliamentarians or women's caucuses and/or support the establishment of cross-party alliances to strengthen collaboration on the promotion of women's rights.
- Support skills training and mentoring schemes and establish platforms for exchanges and cross-learning among political parties, National Electoral Commissions and other stakeholders in the region to strengthen their capacity in gender mainstreaming in election processes.
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Women voters and their safety as they cast their votes:

- Develop a gender mainstreamed civic education strategy in close coordination with governments and civil society organisations (CSOs) to increase voter awareness, leading to higher voter turnout. Political campaigns and the dissemination of information should be based on a gender analysis to ensure that they speak to the interests of both women and men. They should also be designed in such a way that they reach both women and men in local communities, taking into account issues such as illiteracy, language, daily schedules, etc., which may differ between men and women, girls and boys.
- Analyse existing barriers to women (and men) registering and voting. Use the analysis to plan actions to mitigate such barriers. Distribute gender-mainstreamed information on voter rights and safety, including the risk of SGBV and how to report harassment and intimidation, as well as provide useful safety tips.
- Partner with women's CSOs to plan for the adequate setting up and establishment of voting stations. For election day(s), considerations must be made such as available access, opening hours, safety precautions at the location, reasonable distance and sanitary facilities to ensure women can safely access the voting station.
- Monitor and report harassment and sexual violence against women during elections. The police should be trained in how to ensure the safety and security of women during elections.

Gender mainstreaming in election observation missions:

- Ensure that the Electoral Assistance Division proactively identifies qualified women observers from the region and ensures that they are deployed on missions.
- Lobby for the ECOWAS Parliament, ECOWAS Court of Justice, ECOWAS Ambassadors and ECONEC to aim for gender parity when deploying representatives for monitoring and observing elections.

- Collaborate with CSOs and women's groups to serve as national monitors and observers during elections.
- Ensure that election observation training has both male and female participants. The deployed mixed election observation teams should report on instances of discrimination or harassment and lack of equal access to election stations for women and men, including the occurrence of violence and sexual violence, including from the police and guards.
- Support media organisations in the design and implementation of gender-responsive electoral media coverage to portray women candidates in diverse roles and present their political platforms, in order to counter the stereotypical portrayal of women that undermines their participation.
- Assess the situation for male and female observers upon their return to ensure that adequate working conditions are in place and offer them the possibility of being debriefed regarding potential harassment or discrimination in the election team. Document lessons learned for future missions.

2.1.3. MULTILATERAL POLITICAL ENGAGEMENT

The Political Affairs and International Cooperation Division of PAPS is responsible for setting an inclusive regional political agenda and ensuring international consensus on strategies to support stability in the region. It also works to strengthen international co-operation and facilitate cross-border collaboration between research groups and civil society organisations. The implementation of activities related to the WPS Agenda is one of the key priorities of the division as it works to identify and address peace and security challenges in the region.

The division identifies and works with potential external partners including the African Union, the United Nations, the European Union, donor agencies and CSOs in the implementation of UNSCR 1325 and related resolutions and policies. One such effort is with the United Nations Office for West Africa and the Sahel (UNOWAS) and the Kofi Annan International Peacekeeping Training Centre (KAIPTC) in Ghana. In partnership with these institutions, the division organised a Training of Trainers (ToT) workshop on "Building Women's Capacities for Conflict Analysis and Prevention in West Africa and the Sahel" for regional civil society groups in order to enhance women's capacity in conflict prevention, management and resolution, jointly drawing on the ECOWAS Conflict Prevention Framework and UNOWAS' Conflict Analysis Handbook. The division also represents PAPS as gender focal point in the global Women Peace and Security Focal Point Network.

Training on Building Women's Capacities for Conflict Analysis and Prevention in West Africa and the Sahel, 13–17 May 2019.

Multilateral political engagement between PAPS and its partners have been useful for setting global and regional agendas in promoting the WPS Agenda and preventing and addressing civil wars, natural disasters, regional conflicts and transnational organised crimes (ToC), including human, drugs and weapons trafficking, terrorism and piracy. While civil wars, natural disasters and transnational organised crimes affect both women and men, they particularly reinforce systems and structures that exclude and marginalise women. The implementation of the WPS Agenda requires a multilateral political approach to foster complementarity and the harmonisation of efforts.

Despite the numerous gains made over the years, multilateral political engagement in the region is in the decline. There currently appears to be a willingness on the part of partners to provide funds for more militarised options, as can be seen in the case of the conflicts in the Lake Chad Basin with the Multinational J0int Taskforce (MNJTF) and in the Sahel region with the G5 Sahel Joint Force and the Sahel Alliance. Such approaches tend to undermine the significance of a strong civil-military cooperation, which is fundamental to ensuring human security and addressing the root causes and gender dynamics of these conflicts.

ECOWAS has both the policy framework and the political legitimacy to significantly contribute to addressing existing and emerging challenges in the region using effective multilateral political engagement. The guidelines aim to enhance the role of the Commission in strengthening multilateral cooperation with partners within and outside of Africa.

The WPS Agenda calls for:

Measures to increase women's participation: The WPS agenda urges the Secretary-General, Member States and the heads of regional organisations to take measures to increase the representation of women in mediation and decision-making processes with regard to conflict resolution and peacebuilding (S/RES/1888 (2009), §16).

The following resolutions urge Member States and international and regional organisations to take further measures to improve women's participation during all stages of peace processes, particularly in conflict resolution, post-conflict planning and peacebuilding, including by enhancing their engagement in political and economic decision-making in the early stages of recovery processes, through inter alia promoting women's leadership and capacity to engage in aid management and planning, supporting women's organisations, and countering negative societal attitudes about women's capacity to participate equally (S/RES/1889 (2009), (§1)

Development and implementation of policies: The WPS Agenda urges regional and sub-regional bodies to develop and implement policies for the benefit of women and girls affected by sexual violence in armed conflict (S/RES/1820 (2008), §14) and invites them to report on this progress during the annual open debate of the Security Council (S/RES/2493 (2019), §8).

Provision of financial and technical assistance: The WPS Agenda calls upon donor countries to provide financial and technical assistance to women involved in peace processes, including training in mediation, advocacy and technical areas of negotiation (as well as providing support and training to mediators and technical teams on the impact of women's participation and strategies on women's effective inclusion) (S/RES/2242 (2015), §1).

Engage in partnerships with women, civil society and women's organisations and survivors of sexual violence: The WPS Agenda notes with concern that without a significant shift in implementation, women and women's perspectives will continue to be underrepresented in conflict prevention, resolution, protection and peacebuilding for the foreseeable future and encourages those Member States, regional organisations as appropriate, and UN entities [...] to start reviewing existing implementation plans and targets.(S/RES/2122 (2013), §15).

Mediators to engage on sexual violence issues: The WPS Agenda reiterates the importance of addressing sexual violence in armed conflict whenever relevant. For example, in mediation efforts, ceasefires and peace agreements and requests the Secretary-General, Member States and regional organisations, where appropriate, to ensure that mediators and envoys, in situations where it is used as a method or tactic of war, or as part of a widespread or systematic attack against civilian populations, engage on sexual violence issues. This includes women, civil society, women's organisations and survivors of sexual violence, as well as ensuring that such concerns are reflected in specific provisions of peace agreements, including those related

to security arrangements and transitional justice mechanisms. It urges the inclusion of sexual violence in the definition of acts prohibited by ceasefires and in provisions for ceasefire monitoring and stresses the need for the exclusion of sexual violence, as well as ensuring that such concerns are reflected in specific provisions of peace agreements, including those related to security arrangements and transitional justice mechanisms. It urges the inclusion of sexual violence in the definition of acts prohibited by ceasefires and in provisions for ceasefire monitoring and stresses the need for the exclusion of sexual violence crimes from amnesty provisions in the context of conflict resolution processes (S/RES/2106 (2013), §12).

Systematic monitoring of and attention to sexual violence in armed conflict: The WPS Agenda recognises the need for more systematic monitoring of and attention to sexual violence in armed conflict and post-conflict situations and other women and peace and security commitments in its own work. In this regard, the Security Council expresses its intent to employ, as appropriate, all means at its disposal to ensure women's participation in all aspects of mediation, post-conflict recovery and peacebuilding and to address sexual violence in conflict. For example, in the establishment and review of peacekeeping and political mandates, public statements, country visits, fact-finding missions, international commissions of inquiry, consultations with regional bodies and in the work of relevant Security Council sanctions committees (S/RES/2106 (2013), §5).

Action Points:
- Commission and finance research that explores the root causes of armed conflict and security risks from a gender perspective. Use gender analysis to inform policy and programme implementation. Partnerships with academic institutions and women's organisations in participatory and collaborative research efforts should be envisioned.
- Develop a concerted fund-raising strategy to advance the WPS Agenda in the region. Proactively call on partners to ensure that the activities they fund or implement in the region are gender mainstreamed and adhere to the WPS Agenda.
- Support and facilitate networks and meetings for coordination and partnerships with women's rights organisations on issues relating to PAPS responsibilities.
- Contribute with regional insights and learning to the global implementation of the WPS Agenda and shape the emphasis and focus on multilateral political engagement. Engage the UN and AU in recurrent exchanges on best practices to address and implement the WPS Agenda in the region.
- Encourage, enable, and support female staff to participate in Multilateral Political Engagement in order to share their invaluable experiences in the region.
- Leverage the political will of partners to champion the WPS Agenda and use the lessons learnt and best practices from others to strategically position ECOWAS as a committed champion.
- Ensure that peacekeeping and political mandates, as well as terms of reference for fact-finding missions and commissions of inquiry, include text relating to conflict-related sexual violence with instructions and indicators for follow up.

- Keep lobbying for the development of a strong civilian-military cooperation in West Africa since it is a prerequisite for a human security approach and implementation of the Women, Peace and Security agenda.
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2.1.4.   HUMAN RIGHTS AND RULE OF LAW

Since gaining their independence, most West African countries have experienced challenges related to disrespect for human rights and the rule of law due to factors such as ineffective governance, weak state infrastructure, repressive regimes, excessive centralisation of power, and corruption. Consequently, in several countries, a drive towards the oppression of political opponents, civil society and the media has been noted rather than efforts to strengthen human rights and rule of law institutions. This has led to challenges in equal and equitable access to justice for West Africans, particularly for women and girls. In cases in which access to justice is possible, the services provided do not usually recognise the differential needs of women and girls, thereby further disadvantaging them.

The mystification of rule of law procedures and difficulties in accessing services have resulted in people, particularly women and girls, relying on traditional approaches to conflict resolution and customary law. In some members states, rulings on matters within, for example, family law are often handed over to the traditional system, while comparatively more accessible customary law practices often disadvantage women and girls, with marital disputes, intimate partner violence and divorce being addressed through male- dominated resolution mechanisms, often led by elders and religious leaders.

Both the ECOWAS Supplementary Protocol on Democracy and Governance 2001 (Articles 40 & 43) and the ECPF framework (Section VII) encourage Member States to protect and promote the rights, welfare and dignity of women and girls. However, there is a need for concrete and immediate measures to be undertaken by ECOWAS in supporting the strengthening of human rights and rule of law in its Member States, particularly for women and girls.

Additional challenges to upholding the rule of law emerge in the context of the widespread use of conflict- related sexual violence in West Africa. With the exception of transitional justice initiatives and mechanisms rolled out in countries such as Sierra Leone and Liberia, or more recently in The Gambia, little has been done to effectively compensate survivors of conflict-related sexual violence, increasing instances of impunity. This further undermines human rights and the rule of law in the region.

The WPS Agenda calls for:

The protection of women's and girl's rights during and after conflicts: The WPS Agenda reiterates the need to fully implement international humanitarian and human rights law which protects the rights of women and girls during and after conflicts (S/RES/1325 (2000), S/RES/1889 (2009) §2). Furthermore, the Agenda affirms that states bear primary responsibility for respecting and ensuring the human rights of their citizens, as well as all individuals within their territory, as provided for by relevant international law (S/RES/1820 (2008)). The WPS Agenda also demands that

all parties to armed conflict immediately take appropriate measures to protect civilians, including women and children, from all forms of sexual violence (S/RES/1820 (2008) §3, (S/RES/1888 (2009) §3).

Assisting national authorities to strengthen the rule of law: The WPS Agenda encourages Members States of the UN to strengthen the rule of law and the capacity of civilian and military justice systems to address sexual violence in armed conflict and post-conflict situations as part of broader efforts to strengthen institutional safeguards against impunity (S/RES/2106 (2013), §18).

Participation without fear of being attacked: The WPS Agenda highlights that violence and intimidation undermine the possibilities of women to participate in conflict prevention, conflict resolution and post-conflict public life. Hence, the lack of security and the lack of the rule of law need to be addressed (S/RES/1889 (2009)).

Capacity strengthening in terms of human rights: The WPS Agenda calls for the provision of human rights and rule of law training for peacekeeping personnel (both military and civilian) in the protection, special needs and human rights of women and children in conflict situations (S/RES/1325 (2000) §6).

Bringing perpetrators of sexual violence to justice: In the efforts to fight impunity, the WPS Agenda consistently calls for bringing more perpetrators of sexual violence to justice (S/RES/1960 (2010)). Further, it recognises that "the effective investigation and documentation of sexual violence in armed conflict is instrumental both in bringing perpetrators to justice and ensuring access to justice for survivors" (S/RES/2106 (2013), §2).

BOX 5 : WOMEN-LED PEACE HUTS IN LIBERIA

Women-Led Peace Huts are a good example of sustainable grassroots efforts to promote the WPS Agenda. Through fostering women's ownership and leadership of human rights and the rule of law, peace processes are strengthened. What began as a peacebuilding model in post-war Liberia has been shaped over time into an example of how women can build systems and structures to educate their peers on women's rights, access security and justice services, follow through on victims' search for justice, provide alternative dispute resolution services in communities, liaise with the police, provide the police with information on human rights abuses and violations and serve as the voice and the conscience of their communities.

Women-Led Peace Huts have been established across Liberia and are a vital infrastructure that continue to contribute significantly to the promotion and protection of the rights and welfare of women and girls in the country. The Peace Huts have male members and collaborate with and mobilise social capital at national and local levels to promote the rights of women. WANEP and UN Women are the lead organisations currently supporting the expansion of the model in the country. It engages good practices that ECOWAS and other countries in the region could learn from in order to strengthen the inclusion and participation of grassroots women in issues related to human rights and the rule of law.

Action Points:
- Undertake a comprehensive gender analysis of the security and justice sectors in a selected number of countries to identify differences in access to justice, as well as the perceived relevance of crimes and the outcome of rulings, depending on whether you are a woman or a man.
- Ensure that research, in addition to sex- and age-disaggregated data on human rights and the rule of law in Member States, include differences between women and men in legal aspects, such as family law, custody, inheritance, land and property rights and labour laws. Research findings should inform ECOWAS programming, thereby enabling the Commission to take relevant, guided and effective action.
- Ensure legal institutions in the region provide gender-responsive services, capacity building in gender mainstreaming for staff in judicial institutions, as well as address barriers to equal access to justice for women and girls. Gender mainstreaming, i.e. the inclusion of a gender perspective, needs to be advanced in the context of criminal investigation, witness protection and public outreach.
- Advance gender-responsive rule of law institutions in West Africa through fundraising with global partners and donors, such as the World Bank, UN agencies and the EU, in order to fully integrate WPS initiatives into existing development and humanitarian funding.
- Integrate the WPS Agenda in peace agreements, transitional justice processes and hybrid courts, not only to right past wrongs, but also to enhance the gender perspective on human rights and the rule of law in post-conflict settings.
- Provide human rights and rule of law training for peacekeeping personnel (both military and civilian) in the protection, special needs and human rights of both women and men in conflict situations. This will help the deployed personnel to support the strengthening of human rights and the rule of law, as well as simultaneously desist from committing offences while deployed.
- Train judges and paralegals on the WPS Agenda and how to adopt a gender perspective in their work including, but not limited to, prosecuting conflict-related sexual violence. Actively collaborate and create partnerships with Women Human Rights defenders, women's rights organisations and networks of women lawyers and human rights actors in Member States together with the national human rights commissions.

2.2. PEACEKEEPING AND REGIONAL SECURITY DIRECTORATE

The ECOWAS Protocol Relating to the Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management, Resolution, Peace- Keeping and Security was adopted in December 1999 and is arguably the most comprehensive protocol relating to peace and security in the region. It addresses peacekeeping, humanitarian support and peace- building capabilities, as well as the issue of cross-border crime. Article 2 describes the Member States' commitment and main principles. One of these fundamental principles emphasises the "protection of fundamental human rights and freedoms and the rule of international humanitarian laws" (ECOWAS 2019, Article 2 f).

The Peacekeeping and Regional Security Directorate oversees ECOWAS Peacekeeping Operations and regional security in the Directorate through its three divisions: Peace Support Operations, Small Arms and Light Weapons, and Regional Security. It develops policies and action plans, mobilising international support and the required resources to mitigate violent conflicts and promote stabilisation efforts in the region.

2.2.1.   PEACE SUPPORT OPERATIONS

Over the years, the concept of peacekeeping has changed from the traditional, primarily military model of observing ceasefires and the separation of forces, to a multidimensional model involving the military, police and a civilian component. The Doctrine of the ECOWAS Standby Force (ESF) from 2016 makes a clear reference to the ECOWAS Gender Policy and states that the Peace Support Operation Division (PSOD) "should leverage on this institutional framework to ensure that principles of gender equality espoused in UN Security Council Resolution 1325 and other related gender architecture permeate the planning and execution of peace support operations. This means that PSOs should ensure the participation of women and men as equal partners and beneficiaries in all aspects of the peace process" (ECOWAS 2016: 104). Thus, it is important to recognise the equal right of women and men to participate as peacekeepers and active participants throughout the peace process.

The AU Peace and Security Council emphasises "the protection of a non-combatant's basic right to life and dignity as a fundamental element of all peace support operations" (African Union 2006: 3).

Evidently, the development of the current mandates of PSOs recognises the centrality of protecting civilians from the wrath of violent conflict. The growing importance of the protection of civilians also gives visibility to the specific needs and rights of women and girls in armed conflicts. If the ESF is to adhere to the Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management, Resolution, Peacekeeping and Security, it requires a strong collaboration between all mission components (military, police and civilian), host nation and relevant national actors. The existence of coherent policies and strategies concerning the protection of civilians, notably protection from physical harm and the establishment of a protective environment for women, men, boys and girls from all backgrounds, is essential to the legitimacy, credibility and success of PSOs (ECOWAS 2016).

At the time of writing, the ESF has two missions in the region: the ECOWAS Mission in the Gambia (ECOMIG) and the ECOWAS Mission in Guinea Bissau (ECOMIB).

CRVS ToT Training with the ECOMIG Mission, 3–6 February 2020.

The primary role of the military component in peacekeeping missions is to provide a secure environment as a prerequisite for advancing other elements of the peace process in often complex conflict-affected environments involving state and multiple non-state actors on a local and national level. These contexts require direct interactions between military peacekeepers and local populations, which means that a gender perspective is essential. (UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations 2010: 8). In order to comprehend how a security situation is different for men and women, a gender analysis will ensure a more effective targeted response by the military. Furthermore, having both men and women as peacekeepers will better reflect the society, which could improve the relationship between a host community and the peacekeeping force. It would also demonstrate ECOWAS' engagement in promoting equal participation.

Detect and Respond to Conflict Related Sexual Violence ToT, ECOMIB Mission, 7-10 October 2019

The police component is a core component of ECOWAS' multidimensional peacekeeping efforts. It complements the activities of the military in promoting peace and stability and often focuses on issues such as building the capacity of the local police and other security actors. The police work to reinforce and re-establish security by patrolling communities, advising domestic police services, increasing compliance with international human rights standards, and restoring and promoting public safety. Thus, it is important to understand how security differs between men and women, boys and girls. It is the police that will be first responders on issues such as SGBV). It is essential that the police force has both women and men, that their training is gender mainstreamed and that their services in host communities are accessible to both women and men considering their different needs. For example, this could entail the establishment of women's and girls' desks, the development of Standing Operating Procedures (SOPs) for handling SGBV cases and how to conduct interviews with survivors.

The civilian component has a complementary role in supporting military and police personnel deployed in ECOWAS PSOs in the region. It will complement post-war reconstruction and peacebuilding efforts that the military is less well placed to perform, such as coordination and liaison with host government actors and civil society organisations, including women's rights organisations. In addition, the civilian component may also oversee the ethical behaviour of the military and police and can investigate reports related to sexual exploitation and abuse. The

civilian support that is currently received by the ESF and the police is provided by the Special Representatives of ECOWAS and their staff in the countries in which they are deployed. Where a civilian component in the force is missing, national and local women's groups and networks may be available to offer support with their knowledge and skills in WPS.

Capacity Building Workshop on Know your Women, Peace and Security Framework, 1 July 2019

The WPS Agenda calls for:

Engaging parties to armed conflict: The WPS Agenda continuously and proactively calls for parties to armed conflict to immediately take the appropriate measures to protect civilians ((S/RES/1820 (2008) §3), (S/RES/1888 (2009) §3).

Enhancing the involvement and representation of women in all peacekeeping and peace-building measures: The WPS Agenda seeks to expand the role and contribution of women in (UN) field-based operations, particularly among military observers, civilian police, human rights and humanitarian personnel (S/RES/1325 (2000), §4). The WPS Agenda explicitly calls for an increase in the number of both civilian and uniformed women in peacekeeping at all levels and in key positions (S/RES/2493 (2019), §2).

Increasing the representation of women among military and police personnel: The WPS Agenda aims to deploy greater numbers of female military and police personnel to PKOs and to provide all military and police personnel with adequate training to carry out their responsibilities (S/RES/ 1888 (2009), §19, (S/RES/1960 (2010), §15). Due to the delay in achieving the goals for women's representation, S/RES/2242 (2015) calls for a strategy to double the number of women in military and police contingents of UN PKOs over the next five years (effectively by 2020) (§8). Resolution S/RES/2467 (2019) encourages Member States to promote equal opportunities for women at all levels of national police service and other security positions (§26).

Deploying gender advisers to military and political missions: The WPS Agenda requests the appointment of gender advisers

(S/RES/1889 (2009) §7) and recognises the distinct roles of gender advisers in ensuring that a gender perspective is mainstreamed in policies, planning and implementation by all mission elements (S/RES/2106 (2013), §8).

Demonstrating commitment and political will to prevent sexual violence: The WPS Agenda also recognises the need for civilian and military leaders, consistent with the principle of command responsibility, to demonstrate commitment and political will to prevent sexual violence, combat impunity and enforce accountability. The agenda emphasises that inaction could send a message that the incidence of sexual violence in conflicts (SViC) is tolerated (S/RES/1888 (2009)).

Standards and discipline for national and deployed military personnel: The WPS Agenda demands that all parties to armed conflict immediately take appropriate measures to protect civilians, including women and children, from all forms of sexual violence, including measures such as, inter alia, enforcing appropriate military disciplinary measures and upholding the principle of command responsibility, training troops on the categorical prohibition of all forms of sexual violence against civilians, debunking myths that fuel sexual violence and vetting candidates for national armies and security forces to ensure the exclusion of those associated with serious violations of international humanitarian and human rights law, including sexual violence (S/RES/1888 (2009), §3).

Technical advisory on the integration of gender equality: The WPS Agenda calls to ensure that technical support is provided to troop- and police-contributing countries in pre-deployment and induction training, in order to include guidance for military and police personnel on addressing sexual violence (S/RES/ 1888 (2009), §20).

Addressing impunity and investigating reports of sexual violence: The WPS Agenda urges parties to a conflict to ensure that all reports of sexual violence committed by civilians or military personnel are thoroughly investigated and that the alleged perpetrators are brought to justice. In accordance with international humanitarian law, civilian superiors and military commanders should use their authority and powers to prevent sexual violence, including by combating impunity (S/RES/1888 (2009), §7). This further relates to working closely with national legal and judicial officials and other personnel in the relevant governments' civilian and military justice systems to address impunity and strengthen national capacity (S/RES/1888 (2009), §8).

Developing and delivering training in gender mainstreaming for deployed personnel: The WPS Agenda calls for the development of guidelines and materials to enhance capacity strengthening on protection, human rights and the particular needs of women, as well as the importance of involving women in all peacekeeping and peacebuilding measures (S/RES/1325 (2000), §6). The development of content for training should include the prohibition of all forms of sexual violence against civilians and debunking myths that fuel sexual violence (S/RES/1820 (2008), §3). It should also include training in the measures needed to ensure the protection of and respect for the human rights of women and girls, particularly as they relate to the police (S/RES/1325 (2000), §8), as well as the prevention of sexual violence against women and girls in conflict and post-conflict situations (S/RES/1820 (2008), §8). Explicitly, the WPS Agenda states that (national) training programmes for military

and police personnel in preparation for deployment should incorporate HIV/AIDS awareness training (S/RES/1325 (2000), §6).

Protection and prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse: The WPS Agenda calls for implementing a policy of zero tolerance for sexual exploitation and abuse (SEA) in UN Peacekeeping operations.

Furthermore, the Agenda urges troop- and police-contributing countries to take appropriate preventive action, including pre-deployment and in-theatre awareness training and other action to ensure full accountability in cases of such conduct involving their personnel (S/RES/1820 (2008), §7).

BOX 6: UN SECRETARY-GENERAL'S REMARKS TO THE SECURITY COUNCIL ON WOMEN IN PEACEKEEPING

Evidence shows that greater numbers of women peacekeepers leads to protection responses that are more credible and meet the needs of all members of local communities. Women in patrol units are better able to reach both men and women in areas of operation, accessing critical intelligence and providing a more holistic view of the security challenges.

The presence of women at checkpoints has been credited with promoting a less confrontational atmosphere, and more women in troop contingents is credited with higher reporting of SGBV and lower incidences of SEA. Equally, access to women's networks can enable female peacekeepers to consult with a broader section of the population who may have very different requirements and perspectives on sustainable peace. This lays the ground for another shared goal – more representative and inclusive peace processes.

As we approach the 20th anniversary of Security Council resolution 1325 on WPS, we need to do far more to ensure that women's rights, women's voices and women's participation are at the centre of peacekeeping decision-making. This is central to sustainable solutions in all the contexts in which we work.

Source: António Guterres-UN Secretary-General 2019

Action Points
- PAPS leadership as well as the Chief of Staff of the ESF and the heads of the military, police and civilian components of ECOWAS missions must demonstrate commitment to gender mainstreaming and adherence to the WPS Agenda through follow up on the guidance below.
- Ensure that a gender analysis is conducted by military and police planning missions prior to full deployment of troops in order to ensure an accurate understanding of the local context.
- Review existing pre-deployment training and develop new forms of training to ensure that they are gender mainstreamed and adhere to the WPS Agenda. Develop context specific WPS training material on the protection of civilians that includes gender mainstreaming and the WPS Agenda.
- Ensure pre-deployment gender training for all military personnel. The distinct components of the training need to include the following: 1) Human Rights and the Rule of Law, 2) How to incorporate a gender perspective and gender analysis, 3) Standing Operating Procedures (SOPs) on managing sexual and gender-based violence, including CRSV and 4) Protection

from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA) and the codes of conduct and reporting mechanisms (for disciplinary issues).

- Develop internal SOPs to strengthen ethical behaviour among troops. Ensure the SOPs are implemented through information and training. Investigate and prosecute incidents of SEA perpetrated by personnel deployed by ECOWAS.
- Deploy gender experts to provide technical advice to the Special Representatives in Members States in which the ESF is deployed to strengthen the military, police and civilian components.
- Participate in national SOPs for the management of SGBV in countries in which troops are deployed. Troops should also have established an internal procedure on how to manage survivors of SGBV and how to report on incidents in which dignity of and respect for the survivor are key.
- Devise context-specific incentives for military- and police-contributing countries to increase the number of women in police and military contingents. Additionally, ensure that living and working conditions are conducive to the deployed male and female personnel.
- Increase the number of women represented in boards of enquiries, which are investigative board constituted to conduct inquiries into reports of misconduct by personnel deployed on missions. Such boards should be regularly provided with training on WPS.
- Keep an updated civilian roster and deploy a civilian component in existing and future peace support operations that adhere to both the ESF doctrine and the WPS Agenda. If necessary, fundraise with partners to ensure that this is feasible.

2.2.2.   SECURITY GOVERNANCE

For several decades, West Africa has contended with multiple transnational security challenges that threaten the peace and stability of the region. ECOWAS' principal areas of focus on existing and emerging threats are (1) Counterterrorism, (2) Maritime Security and Safety, (3) Security Sector Reform (SSR) and Governance and (4) Transnational Organised Crimes. These are principally regulated by the Counter-Terrorism Strategy and Implementation Plan of 2013, the ECOWAS Maritime Strategy and Implementation Plan of 2014, the Supplementary Act on ECOWAS Policy Framework for Security Sector Reform and Governance of 2016, as well as the Constitution of the West African Police Chiefs' Committee (WAPCCO) in 2008.

Despite references to gender in security governance policies, discriminatory attitudes and practices persist to exist and the activities undertaken have not been as gender responsive as they should have been. While SSR and DDR programmes implemented in, for example, Sierra Leone, Liberia and Cote d'Ivoire succeeded in contributing to sustainable peace in the region, they were largely gender blind. For instance, the DDR programmes in Sierra Leone and Liberia did not include female fighters and/or women associated with armed groups, meaning that they did not qualify for the re-integration programmes and, in many cases, were ostracised from their communities.

In order to implement security governance that complies with the WPS Agenda, the representation of women in state security

apparatuses must be enhanced. The rapid spread of violent extremism in countries such as Nigeria, Mali, Burkina Faso and Niger have destabilised communities, leading to a humanitarian crisis. Initiatives designed to prevent and address issues such as violent extremism and transnational organised crime should also address the differential factors that render women and girls and men and boys vulnerable to recruitment and participation.

The WPS Agenda calls for:

Promoting and empowering women while transforming harmful societal attitudes: The WPS Agenda recognises that the promotion and empowerment of women and women's organisations and networks are essential to the consolidation of peace. Consequently, Member States, donors and civil society, including NGOs, need to provide adequate support to ensure the equal and full participation of women (S/RES/1888 (2009)). The WPS Agenda further promotes women's leadership and capacity to engage in aid management and planning (S/RES/1889 (2009), §1), as well as women's full participation and protection in election preparation and political processes, DDR programmes, SSR and judicial reforms, and wider post-conflict reconstruction processes where these are mandated tasks in the mission (S/RES/2122 (2013), §4). Another key component relates to countering negative societal attitudes about women's capacity to participate equally (S/RES/1889 (2009), §1).

Supporting and strengthening women's groups and organisations: The WPS Agenda recognises the importance of supporting and promoting civil society, particularly local grassroots, women-led organisations, and religious and community leaders, girls- and youth-led organisations, for all prevention and response efforts, while supporting community mobilisation campaigns to help shift the stigma of sexual violence from the victims to the perpetrators, and to promote cohesion among communities (S/RES/2467 (2019), §19).

Coordination between civilian and military forces: The WPS Agenda seeks to expand the role and contribution of women in UN field-based operations, particularly among military observers, civilian police, human rights and humanitarian personnel (S/RES/1325 (2000), §4), by incorporating women at the decision-making level (S/RES/1325 (2000), §1-2). Furthermore, the WPS Agenda aims to ensure the participation and leadership of women and women's organisations in developing strategies to counter violent extremism and terrorism (S/RES/2242 (2015), §13).

Strengthening the rule of law: The WPS Agenda refers to security governance when calling for Member States to expand the rule of law and the capacity of civilian and military justice systems to address sexual violence in armed conflict and post-conflict situations as part of broader efforts to strengthen institutional safeguards against impunity (S/RES/2106 (2013) §18).

Coordination and cooperation for systematic monitoring of sexual violence in conflict: The WPS Agenda continuously

recognises the need for more systematic monitoring of and attention to sexual violence in armed conflict and post-conflict situations. In this regard, it expresses its intention to "employ, as appropriate, all means at its disposal to (…) address sexual violence in conflict, including, inter alia, in the establishment and review of peacekeeping and political mandates, public statements, country visits, fact-finding missions, international commissions of inquiry, consultations with regional bodies and in the work of relevant Security Council sanctions committees" (S/RES/2106 (2013) §15).

BOX 7 : POLICE REFORM IN SIERRA LEONE AND INTEGRATION OF THE WPS AGENDA

The SSR process in Sierra Leone, which ensued in 2002 after the country's 11-year civil war (1991 to 2002), focused largely on the reform of the Sierra Leone Police, which was perceived as having contributed to the outbreak of the civil war. The reform process aimed at mainstreaming gender and promoting women's inclusion and participation at all levels of the police. This included the enhancement of services provided by the force. Thus, a Gender Department was established that included a Family Support Unit to address issues such as domestic violence, child support and other family-related conflicts. In addition, a gender mainstreaming policy and a Policy on Sexual Exploitation, Harassment and Abuse were developed in 2008 and called for at least 30% female representation in the different units of the police. This policy contained an accelerated promotion scheme for female officers and a sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment policy geared towards protecting and promoting the interests of women in the force. Training programmes and activities were reviewed to ensure relevance and the promotion of gender equality. Both the Gender Mainstreaming and Sexual Exploitation, Harassment and Abuse policies were reviewed and updated in 2014.

The Government of Sierra Leone has established oversight mechanisms, such as the Police Council, headed by the Vice President, the Parliamentary Committee on Internal Security, the Independent Police Complaints Board and the Complaints, Discipline, and Internal Investigations Department to democratise the force and ensure that it functions as a modern, people-centred and disciplined force. While full mainstreaming the WPS Agenda still requires significant reform and investment, immense progress has been made in increasing the representation of women in leadership and decision-making roles in the Sierra Leone Police.

Action Points:
- Commission research to design gender-responsive approaches to transnational organised crime (ToC). Support government actors to better design and implement approaches that address the gendered impact of transnational threats such as violent extremism, terrorism, piracy and trafficking in persons in a more gender-responsive and sustainable manner.
- Ensure that gender assessment and analysis in the different thematic areas of security governance are conducted at regional and national levels to best guide PAPS in the implementation of gender-responsive security governance interventions.
- Engage and provide Member States with the training and technical support required to advance gender mainstreaming in the security sectors in their respective countries. Training and support should be based on gender analysis of the security architecture.
- Support Member States in developing a collaborative and integrated approach to addressing

the impact on women and men, girls and boys of the existing and emerging threats in the region by generating exchanges, consultations, workshops and disseminating research findings with national and international partners.

- Monitor SSR, DDR and Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism/Counter Terrorism-Programmes in the region and engage Member States on the need to and way of comprehensively mainstreaming the WPS Agenda into such programmes. This means understanding the situation for women and men, girls, and boys in relation to, for example, groups such as the Boko Haram. Are both women and men being recruited? What customs and traditions are driving men and boys to join? Why do women and girls join? What is needed for women to reintegrate back into their communities? What is needed for men?

- Design Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning frameworks and tools to ensure adherence to the WPS Agenda in security governance at regional and national levels. Clarify that everyone concerned collects and provides sex-disaggregated data as the basis for all interventions.

2.2.3. SMALL ARMS AND LIGHT WEAPONS CONTROL

For several decades, West Africa has been grappling with the proliferation, trafficking, illicit circulation and misuse of SALW. This has helped fuel armed conflicts, political violence, drugs and human trafficking. Disruptions fuelled by the circulation of SALW and misuse in the region "reverse decades of progress, places enormous burden on the family settings and has overwhelmingly negative consequences for men, women, boys and girls of ECOWAS Member States" (ECOWAS Baseline Assessment of the Integration 0f Gender Dynamics into ECOWAS SALW Control Interventions, 2019).

The ECOWAS Convention on Small Arms, Light Weapons, their Ammunition, and other Associated Material Convention (2006) guides the import, export, manufacturing and stockpiling of SALW. It connects to the ECOWAS Protocol Relating to Conflict Prevention, Management and Resolution, Peacekeeping and Security (1999), which provides the basis for ECOWAS policy in the fields of defence, security and peacebuilding. The possession, use, misuse of SALW, as well as the effects of and general attitudes towards them, differ between women and men. As

outlined in the UN International Control Small Arms Standards (ISACS), most of the world's estimated 875 million small arms are used by men (ISACS June 2010) to kill other men. Most people who work in professions in which small arms are routinely used, for example, law enforcement, military and private security, as well as for purposes such as hunting, are men. While the vast majority of men and boys would never engage in violence if they could choose not to, it is also evident that most perpetrators of armed violence are male. This suggests that violent behaviour is a social construction and is not congenital. Hence, boys are not born violent but learn through culture and society to act out violently as they grow up.

Society often expects men to defend and protect their pride, reputation, families, country or property. Men frequently see weapons as symbols of courage, masculinity and/or honour. This explains why men more often perceive guns as being necessary to fulfil perceived expectations of what it means to be a man. In conflict environments, generalised crime will also increase, and often affect women and girls, as they more frequently move in conflict-affected communities without any functioning police

force and with a lack of the rule of law. Women associated with armed groups may have a role in the trafficking of SALW. For example, some women collaborate with armed groups to conceal and transport weapons.

The ECOWAS Small Arms Division of PAPS, with the support of the Department of Gender and Social Affairs, has conducted a baseline study of Gender-Responsive Small Arms Control in the ECOWAS region. It assessed the regional context of the proliferation, illicit circulation and trafficking of SALW and its impact on women and girls, men and boys.

The WPS Agenda calls for:

Women's full and meaningful participation in SALW Control: The WPS Agenda calls for women's full and meaningful participation in efforts to combat and eradicate the illicit transfer and misuse of SALW (S/RES/2122 (2013), §14).

Inclusion of women in SALW Control: The WPS Agenda encourages the empowerment of women, including through capacity-building efforts, as appropriate, to participate in the design and implementation of efforts related to the prevention, combating and eradication of the illicit transfer and the destabilising accumulation and misuse of SALW (S/RES/2242 (2015), §15).

Protection and accurate assessments: The

The study further assessed the consistency of legal and normative frameworks, project interventions, processes, policies on arms control at national and regional levels and of relevant international legal frameworks on gender mainstreaming.

A key output of the study was a Regional Action Plan on Gender Mainstreaming in Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW) Control, which was validated in October 2019. The action plan offers inclusive and practical measures to tackle SALW proliferation and the misuse of SALW through a gender perspective.

WPS acknowledges that the illicit transfer, destabilising accumulation and misuse of SALW fuel armed conflicts and include a wide range of negative human rights, humanitarian, development and socioeconomic consequences, particularly regarding the security of civilians in armed conflict, including the disproportionate impact of violence perpetrated against women and girls and exacerbating SGBV in conflict (S/RES 2467 (2019)). In particular, the UN calls for (for example) regional organisations to consider the specific impact of conflict and post-conflict environments on the security, mobility, education, economic activity and opportunities of women and girls in order to mitigate the risk of women and girls becoming active players in the illicit transfer of SALW (S/RES/2242 (2015), §15).

BOX 8 : GUIDANCE UN CASA (2017) – ISACS: REGIONAL ORGANISATIONS
Since SALW can cross borders easily, regional approaches, including coordination and harmonisation of laws and practices, are vital for effective SALW control. Regional organisations play an important role in building consensus and momentum and in advancing regional and global norms on SALW control. The illicit trade and misuse of SALW present different problems in

different regions, and states have varying levels of financial and material resources at their disposal to respond to such problems. Regional initiatives and region-wide approaches can help states to gather the necessary financial support and share technical resources.

In developing and implementing regional approaches to SALW control, regional organisations should:

a) Base their policy development on a gender-sensitive assessment of the impact of SALW on men, women, boys and girls.

b) Initiate and promote a systematic approach to gathering sex- and age-disaggregated data on the direct and indirect impact of the misuse of SALW.

c) Ensure women's participation in policy development, decision-making, planning, implementation and M&E processes. Connect the knowledge and experience of relevant civil society groups from the region, in particular those groups working on gender and women's issues, through conferences, exchanges, training programmes, etc. and encourage and support regional networks of CSOs, including women's groups.

Regional organisations may also:

a) Encourage the establishment of regional observatories on SALW proliferation and misuse and promote their link to other regional observatories and with observatories at national and/or local levels, including those focusing on gender and women's issues; and

Note: Existing regional or sub-regional observatories may benefit from integrating SALW control, including its gendered aspects, into their work. For example, an early warning system could benefit from being able to tap into the knowledge of women's groups about potential flashpoints and weapons flows. An observatory on urban youth violence may benefit from the knowledge of urban girls' associations on factors that trigger violence and the acquisition of small arms, as well as the patterns of small arms circulation in their communities.

b) Provide technical assistance and financial resources to build the capacity of states in the region to address the gender aspects of SALW control.

Source: UN Coordination Action on Small Arms (2017)

Action Points:
- Revise the existing legal and normative frameworks on SALW Control to incorporate a gender perspective.
- Conduct a gender-focused assessment of the impact of SALW circulation in West Africa. Studies should be conducted periodically to assess the changes in trends and dynamics of the impact of SALW on women and men to inform initiatives on SALW control.
- Establish a database with data collected in collaboration with National SALW Commissions and other partners in the respective Member States. The database should capture sex- and age-disaggregated data on the implications of the misuse of SALW on men, women, boys and

girls. Establish clear responsibilities within PAPS on how to update and make use of the data.
- Build the Capacity of National SALW Commissions to comprehensively integrate the WPS Agenda into all existing legal instruments, frameworks, plans and initiatives on SALW Control.
- Strengthen partnerships with women's rights organisations and other CSOs at local, national and regional levels, for better dissemination of information in order to raise public awareness of the dangers of the proliferation of SALW. Women's groups can also provide additional information and perspectives on the unit's work, including successful examples of contributions to SALW control.
- Encourage Member States to include and enhance the participation of women and men in all aspects of SALW control.
- Identify, lobby and work with international partners to coordinate and harmonise plans and initiatives related to SALW to ensure adherence to the WPS Agenda.
- With the support of partners, establish platforms for learning and exchange, through which National SALW Commissions, CSOs and women's groups across the region can engage and exchange lessons learned and best practices.

2.2.4.   EARLY WARNING

The ECOWAS Warning and Response Network (ECOWARN) plays a crucial role in identifying potential risks to human security in West Africa. ECOWARN's double-pronged approach to gathering and analysing quantitative and qualitative data has brought early warning closer to detecting vulnerabilities and predicting potential challenges in the region. It includes national-level analysis, working with a seasoned network of Field Monitors, as well as a National Early Warning and Response Mechanism in Member States. In a bid to bring the WPS Agenda to the forefront of its Early Warning and Response System, the ECOWAS Early Warning Centre undertook to engage in the following initiatives:

- 2017: Development of a framework for

Gender integration into ECOWARN.
- 2018: Development of Gender-Specific Indicators and the Development of features on ECOWARN to enable gender-disaggregated data along the five thematic areas of Human Security.
- 2020: Development of a Gender Integration in Early Warning Manual for Practitioners of Early Warning and Response
- 2020: Development of a Training Module for Practitioners of Early Warning and Response

The development of both the manual and the training module, has provided ECOWARN with vital tools that will enable it to gender mainstream its work. As indicated in the manual "The manual provides guidance on how to apply a gender-sensitive lens to data collection and subsequent analysis, and in
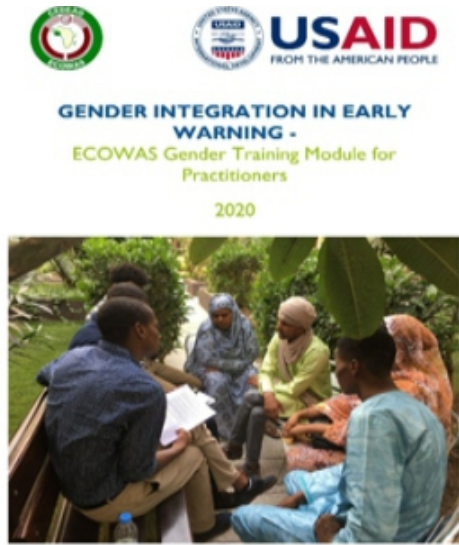
the formulation and implementation of response options. The manual includes training modules to allow for the seamless transfer of knowledge and creation of ongoing institutional capacity" (ECOWAS and USAID 2020: 3).

There is now the need to effectively use the tools in the field to ensure that they meaningfully contribute to strengthening a gender responsive approach to collecting and analyzing data with the aim to develop more informed and tailored recommendations for early response in the Member States of ECOWAS. In doing so, the varied factors that shape the experiences and perceptions of men/boys and women/girls should be considered throughout early warning and response processes. This section provides details on how the Early Warning Mechanism of ECOWAS could further be strengthened to fully adhere to the WPS-agenda.

GENDER INTEGRATION IN EARLY WARNING -
ECOWAS Gender Training Module for Practitioners
2020

This training module was developed with Support from the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) under the Reacting to Early Warning and Response Data in West Africa (REWARD) program.

The WPS Agenda calls for:

Conflict Prevention and Resolution: The Agenda reaffirms "the important role of women in the prevention and resolution of conflicts and in peacebuilding, and stresses the importance of their equal participation and full involvement in all efforts for the maintenance and promotion of peace and security, and the need to increase their role in decision-making with regard to conflict prevention and resolution" (S/RES/1325 (20080).

Inclusion and Participation of Women: UNSCR 1820 urges the Secretary-General and his Special Envoys to invite women to participate in discussions pertinent to the prevention and resolution of conflict, the maintenance of peace and security, and post-conflict peacebuilding, and encourages all parties to such talks to facilitate the equal and full participation of women at decision-making levels (S/RES/1820 (2008), §12).

Systematic reporting: The WPS Agenda requests the Secretary-General to ensure more systematic reporting on incidents of trends, emerging patterns of attack, and early warning indicators of the use of sexual violence in armed conflict in all relevant reports to the Council (S/RES/1888 (2009), §24).

Box 9 : Community-Based Approaches to Early Warning

The Dutch foundation Cordaid has developed a community-based participatory approach to early warning, called the "barometer of local women's security", which has been implemented in seven conflict-affected countries and territories. To create the barometer, Cordaid works with local women to define what security means to them, and the indicators that should be used to measure it. Women receive training in how to collect relevant data, which Cordaid then captures and analyses in a centralised database and shares with local, national and international decision makers. Early results of the project indicate that the barometer bridges the gap between policy makers and local women and equips women with a voice in the day-to-day peace and security of their community.

Action Points

- Conduct intermittent gender analysis of ECOWARN and its methods of operation. A critical gender assessment of ECOWARN will provide a clearer and deeper understanding of existing gender-related gaps and what should be done to address them.
- Expand the existing ECOWARN gender indicators with WPS indicators: To streamline the ECOWAS early warning system to respond to the implementation of the WPS Agenda, as well as increase the focus of additional sections on gender-based violations and abuse.
- ·   Ensure that the WPS is mainstreamed into the data collection template and regularly train field monitors on how to use it properly. This is to ensure that they are familiar with it and collect the kind of data that is expected from them. The training should be tailored to ensure that field monitors are familiarised with the kind of gender/WPS data they should collect, the challenges they will have to face and how they should engage both sexes during data collection.
- Provide training on gender analysis and the WPS Agenda for groups and networks that collaborate with and support the ECOWARN.
- Ensure that data in reports on Early Warning is sex disaggregated. Aim to ensure that the qualitative and quantitative data provided fully captures the experiences, perception and recommendations of women and men.
- Involve women's organisations in data collection for the Early Warning system: An inclusive and participatory approach should be adopted to ensure the meaningful engagement of women's organisations in the collection and analysis/validation of the early warning mechanism.
- Ensure gender parity in the recruitment of field monitors, as men may not necessarily pick up on sensitive issues such as the risk and/or occurrence of sexual violence, or trends relating to survival sex, abortion and other issues predominantly faced by women.
- Recruit gender experts to ECOWARN with extensive experience and knowledge of conflict and potential conflict triggers in West Africa. These experts should collaborate with PAPS and other units in ECOWAS to train Member States on Early Warning and Conflict Prevention.
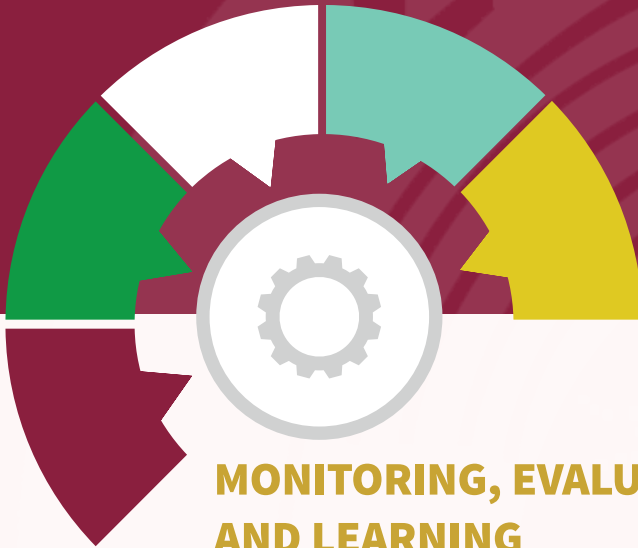
GENDER INTEGRATION IN EARLY WARNING
- ECOWAS Gender Manual for Practitioner

2020

This manual was developed with support from the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) under the Reacting to Early Warning and Response Data in West Africa (REWARD) program.

3

MONITORING, EVALUATION AND LEARNING

ACTION POINTS:

3. MONITORING, EVALUATION AND LEARNING

The PAPS Department needs to strengthen its Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) capability to ensure that it has the capacity to undertake monitoring and evaluation (M&E) of the progress made with the WPS Agenda. Depending on the focus of each unit in PAPS, there is a need to develop a set of indicators to track progress and eventually evaluate adherence to the WPS Agenda. This work could receive guidance from several available frameworks for such indicators. For example:

- The United Nations Global Indicators on women, peace and security.
- Indicators for the EU Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security (WPS) 2019–2024 ((2019)747). Indicators are included in the Action Plan, see Annex 1. These indicators consolidate the EU Gender Action Plan II (GAP II) indicators and the 2016 Revised Comprehensive Approach Indicators.
- The Global Network of Women Peacebuilders civil society indicators.
- Indicators for the Women, Peace and Security Index, developed by Georgetown Institute for Women, Peace and Security and the Peace Research Institute.
- The ECOWAS Conflict Prevention Framework: For example, Article 83, in which the framework specifies benchmarks for assessing progress under the WPS component.
- The AU Continental Results Framework – Monitoring and reporting on the implementation of the Women, Peace and Security Agenda in Africa (2018–2028).

From these, each unit needs to simplify and develop targeted indicators that correlate with their annual work plan. The head of the units are accountable for the overall monitoring and evaluation process, but PAPS WPS Advisory Committee members could be instrumental in supporting them and their unit in this work. While all staff should report on their work regarding the indicators, WPS members could advise them during the drafting of reporting templates, support the compilation of the collected data, as well the drafting of a summary report for the unit.

Action Points:
- With support from the M&E unit of the Commission, conduct training for all staff in Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning in relation to the WPS Agenda. ECOWAS internal or external experts should preferably be part of the training to ensure a WPS focus.
- Conduct specific training for the PAPS WPS Advisory Committee on its role in advising and supporting the development of a Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning system for its directorates and units. This will allow it to develop the capacity for advising on the collection of data and progress of the unit in implementing relevant parts of the WPS Agenda.
- Develop monitoring, evaluation and learning templates relevant to the work of each unit.
- Forge closer links between gender advisers and gender focal points in the region to seize opportunities to institutionalise gender mainstreaming and advance the WPS Agenda among peace and security actors. This could practically be achieved by organising regular

meetings and training activities.

- Establish platforms for learning and exchange that will be used to facilitate regular and inclusive ways of sharing best practice for the advances of the WPS agenda among participating states, ministries and other groups and entities. Conduct joint activities to promote cross learning and exchanges.

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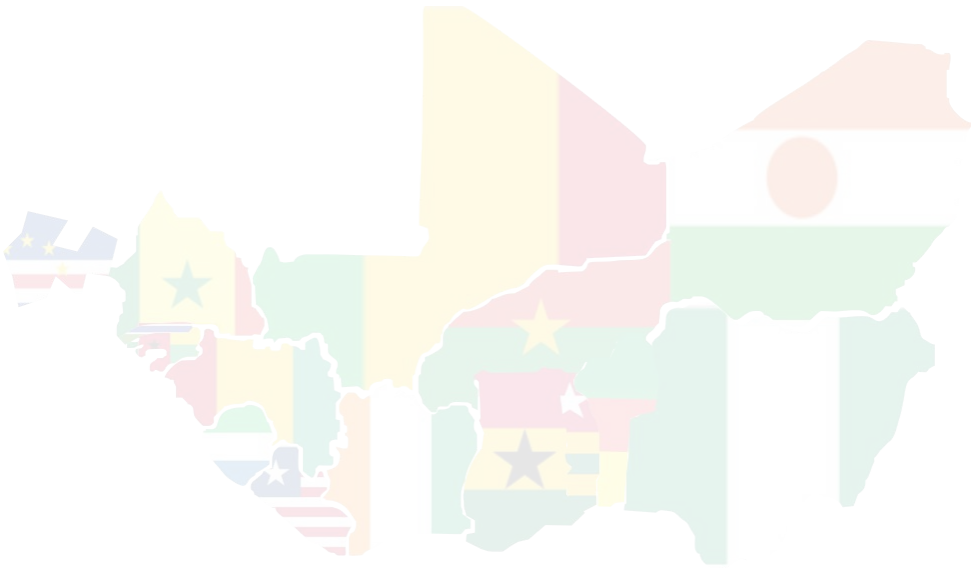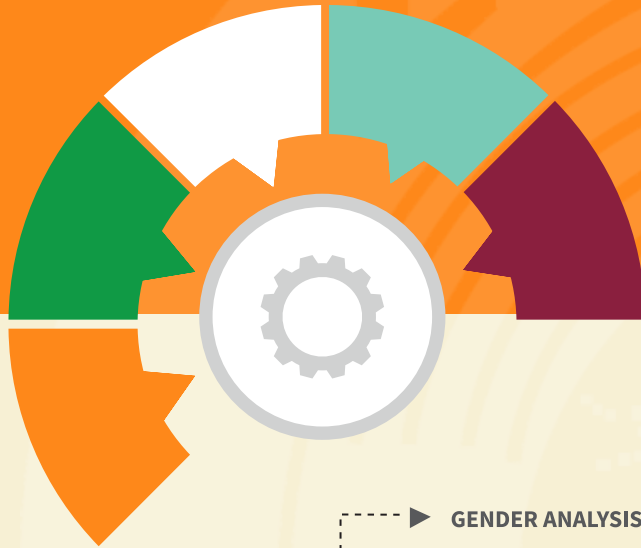
GENERIC CHECKLIST – GENDER MAINSTREAMING IN PAPS

▶ GENDER ANALYSIS

▶ INSTITUTIONALISING GENDER MAINSTREAMING

▶ WOMEN'S RIGHTS, LEADERSHIP AND MEANINGFUL PARTICIPATION

▶ GENDER-RESPONSIVE BUDGETING AND FINANCING

▶ PEACEKEEPING AND REGIONAL SECURITY DIRECTORATE

4.GENERIC CHECKLIST – GENDER MAINSTREAMING IN PAPS

This section presents generic checklists that could be adapted to different contexts by PAPS staff as they promote gender mainstreaming and equality in their daily activities.

1.   GENDER-SENSITIVE LANGUAGE AND REPRESENTATION:

Language shapes the thinking and ideas around gender roles. Written texts and visual material (pictures and videos etc.) should refer to or address diversity among women and men of different ages (and diverse sexual orientation and gender identities) to make distinct realities visible. This applies, for example, to policies, reports, documents, news, as well as templates, texts on the intranet the internet and social media, advertising for events, folders, posters and films. Attention must also be paid to a gender-sensitive choice of images when preparing public relations material.

The language and visual representation used shows men and women of different ages, in different non-traditional roles and with different ethnicities, faiths and disabilities.	◆
The language and visual representation being used actively counters gendered and other biases and stereotypes, stigma and discrimination.	◆
Women and girls are also portrayed and depicted in active and empowered roles.	◆
Relevant sex- and age-disaggregated data is always presented.	◆

2.   COLLECTING, COLLATING AND ANALYSING SEX- AND AGE-DISAGGREGATED DATA:

The collection and analysis of sex- and age-disaggregated data can reveal the differential impacts of a conflict, crisis, policy, programme or intervention on women, men, girls and boys. A gender-specific analysis of the context and initial situation must provide the basis for all policy and programmatic decisions. Social dimensions such as ethnicity, socio-economic status and level of education should also be reflected, where possible.

The quantitative data collected is disaggregated by sex and age. Depending on context and issue, and ensuring that sensitive data is not disclosed, it can also entail information on ethnicity faith and disability.	◆
The composition of data collection teams reflects local dynamics, and can operate as mixed teams, or male- or female-only teams.	◆
Sex- and age-disaggregated data is analysed to inform and outline programming, activities and monitoring.	◆
Sex- and age-disaggregated data and analysis findings are disseminated and presented.	◆

3.   GENDER ANALYSIS

Gender analysis is a tool for ensuring a gender perspective and a tool for gender mainstreaming. The analysis should be conducted before all activities and integrated into all sector assessments or situational analyses so that the planned interventions do not increase gender inequalities. The analysis examines the differences in gender roles, activities, needs, opportunities, insecurities, rights and power in order to understand how they affect men, women, girls and boys in a certain situation or context. The analysis also includes relationships between females and males, their access to and control of resources, and the constraints they face in relation to one another.

There are many different models of gender analysis and they can go more or less in-depth. However, they all focus on asking questions about the situations of women and men and analyse the information in order to develop appropriate activities and strategies, for example, how to increase women's representation and meaningful participation at different levels and across specific phases or how to ensure access to justice for both women and men.

Gender analysis helps to:

- Identify processes and structures that perpetuate disadvantages between women and men, boys and girls (legislative, political, socio-cultural and economic).
- Understand the implications of interventions for women and men, boys and girls.
- Identify areas of action that enhance enablers and remove barriers to women's meaningful participation.
- Identify and design interventions and potential long-term processes that contribute to gender equality.

Gender analysis is the starting point for all projects, processes and planned interventions.	◆
Gender analysis is adequately prioritised by management, in terms of time and resources.	◆
Where possible, the gender analysis team has involved and/or collaborated with CSOs and consulted with women's organisations.	◆
Gender analysis highlights the situation for women and men and the impact it has on their lives. It also contains a section with practical recommendations on how to use the results in future work.	◆
The findings of the gender analysis have been disseminated and the report is available to all relevant actors.	◆
The results and recommendations from the gender analysis and sex-disaggregated data are used to inform ECOWAS policies, processes and activities.	◆

4.   INSTITUTIONALISING GENDER MAINSTREAMING

In order to institutionalise gender mainstreaming, an organisation must ensure that work procedures ensure that all the work is carried out with a gender perspective. It requires efforts to establish and adjust processes to enable all parts of the organisation to identify, understand and address gender inequalities, although sometimes in small steps, to promote gender equality. This means that all employees systematically work with a gender perspective in their day-to-day work, without relying on individual commitments, so that the concerns and experiences of both women and men are an integral part of the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation. To move the process forward, long-term commitment, engaged leadership and support and training for all employees are some of the key aspects.

The institutionalisation of gender mainstreaming in PAPS requires the following:

Gender equality skills and attitudes are included in job advertisements and followed up during recruitment interviews and induction.	◆
Contextualised, tailored (for different staff) and on-the-job training has been developed and gender training opportunities are provided on a recurrent basis.	◆
Work procedures are reviewed and adjusted to ensure that all work is carried out with a gender perspective.	◆
The ECOWAS gender policy and WPS Regional Action plan are disseminated and proactively implemented by the different PAPS Units.	◆
Appointments address women's (or men's) under-representation in working groups, project teams, commissions and advisory boards, as well as when organising events, for example, when selecting speakers, by advancing quota decisions, as well as positive discrimination measures.	◆

5.   WOMEN'S RIGHTS, LEADERSHIP AND MEANINGFUL PARTICIPATION

This entails targeted programming for advancing women's rights and women's leadership/participation, with the objective of enhancing women's capacity to undertake leadership roles and deliver as expected.

|	
There is active involvement by the different PAPS Units in disseminating and advancing awareness of women's rights as human rights in the region.	◆
Regional, national and local women's organisations are regularly consulted as a means of enhancing women's meaningful participation.	◆
Panels, meetings and conferences involve women experts and decision-makers (end all-male panels and boards).	◆

6.   GENDER-RESPONSIVE BUDGETING AND FINANCING

Gender budgeting is a tool which ensures that the financial planning aspect of activities and interventions is gender mainstreamed. A gender-responsive budget is a budget that works for everyone (women and men, girls and boys) by ensuring the gender-equitable distribution of resources and by contributing to equal opportunities for all. Gender-responsive budgeting and financing is essential for ensuring that the resources required for the implementation of WPS activities are available and that they are efficiently used in achieving the results set in WPS programming.

Budgetary planning adequately earmarks the funds required for gender analysis and for gender-specific research funds.	◆
The budget for gender training for staff and for those on missions, in particular mediators, election observation missions and other fact-finding missions, is adequate.	◆
There are budgetary allocations for deployment of gender and WPS advisers.	◆
There are budgetary allocations for adequate gender training of police and military forces.	◆
The WPS Advisory Committee is adequately financed.	◆
Monitoring of budgets and reporting on how the WPS Agenda has been advanced is conducted on an ongoing basis.	◆
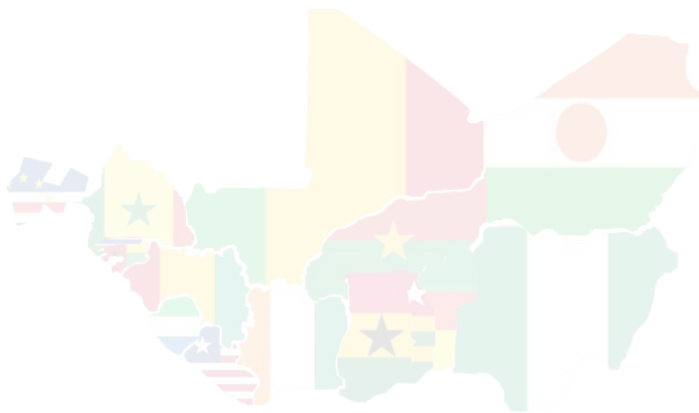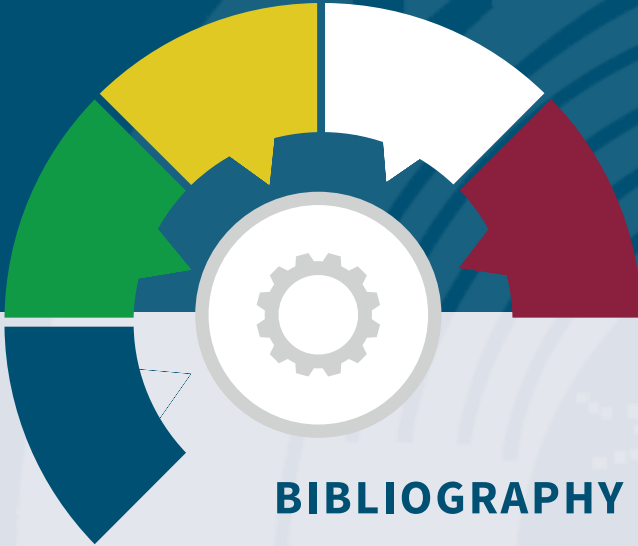
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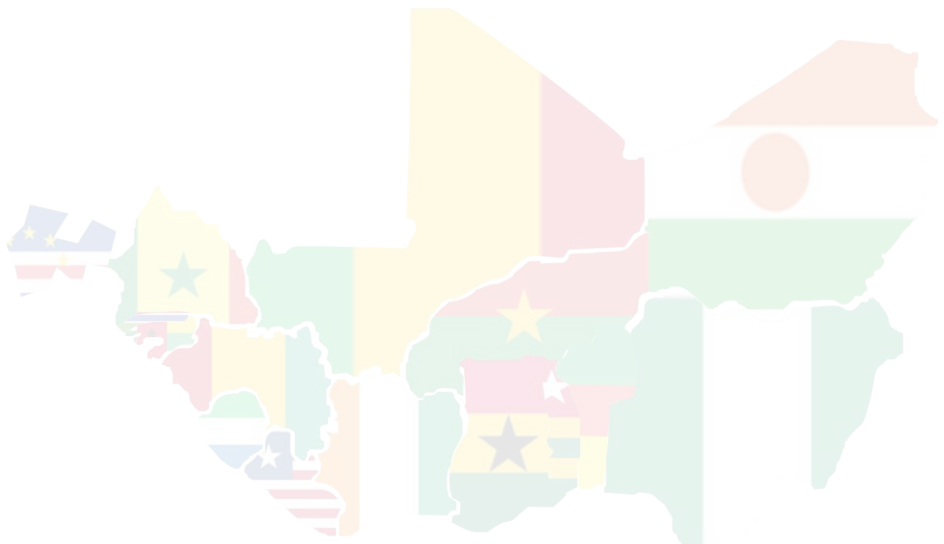
ANNEX

LIST OF ACTORS CONSULTED

No.	Name	Designation	Directorate/ Institution
1.	Onyinye Onwuka	Head of Mediation and Coordination of Regional Political Affairs	Political Affairs
2.	Col. Abdourahmane Dieng	Head, Regional Security Division	Peacekeeping and Regional Security
3.	Alain O. Pale	Head, Peace Support Operations Division	Peacekeeping and Regional Security
4.	Bekaye Coulibaly	Head, Civilian Component, Emergency Standby Force (ESF)	Peacekeeping and Regional Security
5.	Eyesan Okorodudu	Head, Democracy and Good Governance	Political Affairs
6.	Francis Oke	Head, Electoral Assistance Division	Political Affairs
7.	Maj. Gen. Usman Abdulmumin Yusuf	ESF Chief of Staff	Peacekeeping and Regional Security
8.	Sa'adatu Shuaibu	Program Officer, ECOWAS Conflict Prevention Framework	Political Affairs
9.	Esther Daramola	Program Officer, Analyst	Early Warning
10.	Raheemat Momodu	Head, Human Security and Civil Society Division	Humanitarian and Social Affairs
11.	Tamwakat Golit	Women Peace and Security Embedded Adviser	ECOWAS Peace and Security Architecture and Operations (EPSAO) Project. German Agency for International Cooperation

No.	Name	Designation	Directorate/ Institution
12.	Yvonne Akpasom	Head, Conflict Prevention	ECOWAS Peace and Security Architecture and Operations (EPSAO) Project. German Agency for International Cooperation
13.	Abayomi Adeomi	Program Officer, Small Arms Division	Peacekeeping and Regional Security
14.	Maryam Tukur Idris	Research Officer, Electoral Assistance Division	Political Affairs
15.	Brown Odigie	Program Officer, Capacity Building, Mediation Facilitation	Political Affairs
16.	Kete Gillis-Harry	Human Resource Officer, Training	Human Resources
17.	Olivier Zoue	Programme Assistant, Regional Security	Peacekeeping and Regional Security
18.	Sara Lindvall	Senior Specialist, WPS, Regional Development Cooperation, Sub-Saharan Africa	Folke Bernadotte Academy
19.	Marielle Sundin	Senior Women Peace and Security Officer	Folke Bernadotte Academy

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