



## Editor's Note

### Greetings to you, our esteemed readers,

As we delve into the pages of the first edition of the WANEP-Nigeria quarterly newsletter for 2024, we are filled with immense pride and gratitude. This quarter marks a significant milestone in our journey towards sustainable peacebuilding and change as WANEP celebrated 25 years of unwavering commitment to building peace across the region and beyond. It has been a journey marked by resilience, dedication, and the relentless pursuit of a brighter, more peaceful future for all.

In addition to this remarkable milestone, WANEP-Nigeria also actively participated in the commemoration of International Women's Day. With a series of engaging activities both on-ground across our project implementation sites and online, we reaffirmed our commitment to gender equality and the empowerment of women in peacebuilding efforts. Recognizing the invaluable role of women as agents of change, we stand firm in our resolve to amplify their voices and uphold their rights in all our endeavors.

As you flip through the pages of the Newsletter, we invite you to immerse yourselves in the myriad of exciting stories that capture the essence of our work in the quarter. From empowering local communities to fostering dialogue and reconciliation, each narrative reflects our unwavering dedication to building sustainable peace in Nigeria and beyond.

We extend our heartfelt appreciation to our partners, stakeholders, and supporters whose unwavering support continues to fuel our efforts. Together, we stand as beacons of hope, driving positive change and laying the groundwork for a future defined by peace, prosperity, and unity. Thank you for your continued support and interest in our work. We invite you to join us on this journey as we strive to build a world where peace reigns supreme.

Warm regards,

Aveseh Asough  
Communications Officer

**When women participate in peace-making and peace-keeping, we are all safer and more secure. -Unknown**

## WANEP'S 25TH ANNIVERSAR



WANEP-Nigeria Head of Programs, Patience Ikpeh Ubaulor and Kolawaole Olatosimi, WANEP-Nigeria Board Chair

The West Africa Network for Peacebuilding (WANEP) held its 25th Anniversary and Partners Forum as well as Participatory Review and Analysis Processes ( PRAPS) between March 13 - 15, 2024 at Labadi Beach Hotel, Accra Ghana. The program was attended by representatives of Civil Society Organisations, representatives of the 15 WANEP National Networks, military officers, traditional leaders and others.

At the opening ceremony, the Executive Director Dr. Chukwuemeka Eze appreciated the participants for coming to celebrate the Network's 25th Anniversary. He noted that the steady progress the Network has made in the past 25years has culminated into making it the foremost Network in the West Africa region.





## GOODWILL MESSAGE

### FY24 Quarterly Performance Review Meeting (PRM)

The PARTNER Activity conducted its quarterly Performance Review Meeting in Plateau State from January 10th to 12th, 2024. The meeting brought together 28 consortium members from Mercy Corps, Nigeria (MCN), West African Network for Peacebuilding (WANEP-Nigeria), Kaduna State Peace Commission (KSPC), Plateau Peace Building Agency (PPBA), Mambayya House, The Kukah Centre, and the Independent State Peace Architecture (ISPAs) representing Nasarawa, Benue, Kano, and Katsina states. The purpose of the meeting was to assess the program's performance and progress in Quarter one (Q1-FY24) and to devise strategies for impactful interventions in Quarter two (Q2-FY24). Mr. Elkanah Daniel Izam, the Acting Director-General (DG) of PPBA, commenced the event by delivering an opening speech, expressing contentment with the progress achieved thus far in the PARTNER Activity. He also emphasized the Plateau State Government's commitment to collaborating with Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) to foster peace and social cohesion, particularly in areas facing various security challenges such as Bokokos, Barkin Ladi, and Mangu LGAs, with the latter being a focus of the PARTNER intervention.

### The leadership of the Consortium further reiterated the pivotal role of building more resilient communities

During the discussions, each consortium partner presented their activities undertaken in quarter one (Q1) from October to December 2023, sharing insights on both challenges and opportunities encountered in their respective locations. The Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning (MEL) team reflected on these presentations, highlighting the effectiveness of pre and post-tests in measuring immediate knowledge gain, while also acknowledging their limitations in tracking long-term impact. They proposed the adoption of participatory routine monitoring strategies to enhance the effectiveness and sustainability of peacebuilding efforts within the PARTNER Activity framework. To support this initiative, the MEL team will develop an Outcome Journal, a structured tool aimed at capturing community expectations and desires for change. This journal will be integrated into monthly meetings and community dialogue forums, serving as a platform to collect success stories and gain insights into the strategies and challenges faced by target communities over time.

I am filled with immense joy as we collectively commemorate the remarkable milestone of 25 years of dedicated service to peacebuilding within the West African sub region. It is indeed a privilege to witness and celebrate the impactful journey of the West African Network for Peacebuilding (WANEP) as we reflect on its significant contributions towards fostering peace and inspiring positive change.

The theme for this milestone celebration, "25 years of building peace and inspiring change," resonates deeply with the core essence of WANEP's mission. Throughout the years, WANEP has consistently demonstrated its commitment to enabling and facilitating the development of mechanisms for cooperation among civil society-based peacebuilding practitioners. This steadfast dedication has undoubtedly played a pivotal role in advancing the cause of peace and stability across our region.

I commend WANEP for upholding and exemplifying the core values of mutual respect, transparency, accountability, teamwork, diversity, tolerance, and justice. These values serve as the guiding principles that underpin WANEP's operations, ensuring that its initiatives are grounded in integrity and inclusivity.

Furthermore, as we commemorate this milestone during the special month dedicated to women, I extend my heartfelt appreciation to the women of WANEP, notably WIPNET for their remarkable resilience, tenacity, and unwavering commitment to the cause of peace. Your contributions have been instrumental in shaping WANEP's success over the past 25 years, and your tireless efforts continue to inspire us all.

As we look ahead to the future, I am confident that WANEP will continue to thrive and make even greater strides in advancing peacebuilding efforts across West Africa. May the coming years be filled with continued success, innovation, and impactful collaborations as we collectively strive towards a more peaceful and prosperous region.

Warmest regards,  
Margaret Nwagbo, Esq.(FICMC)  
Member, WANEP-Nigeria Board

## EWER Training of Trainers (TOT) Workshop

WANEP-Nigeria organized a Training of Trainers workshop in Kaduna State from January 22 to 24, 2024, targeting participants from Mambaya House and ISPA in Kano, Katsina, Nasarawa, and Benue states. The workshop aimed to enhance EWER and peacebuilding capacities to support program activities at the community level. Fifteen attendees (8 males, 7 females) engaged in participatory learning covering conflict concepts, early warning pillars, community roles, gender integration, and validation of conflict indicators. Participants acquired PARTNER tools for effective program implementation and documentation, including the 'PARTNER Event Report' detailing activity methodology, outcomes, recommendations, and demographic data. The training also highlighted Community Accountability Reporting Mechanism awareness for promoting transparency and mutual accountability in program delivery within PARTNER intervention sites.



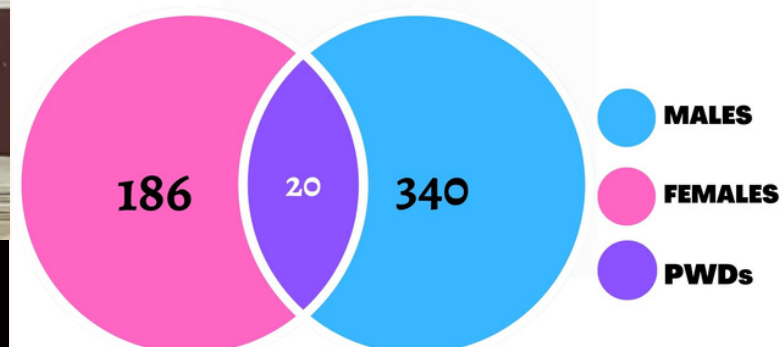
The training achieved the following outcomes: Establishment of a group of proficient and informed EWER facilitators spanning the PARTNER implementation sites. and Validation of the gender-sensitive conflict indicators, refined by the consortium to accurately represent the particular context.

## Improved mechanisms for dialogues and discussion



The PARTNER program partnered with KSPC and PPBA with the support of Mercy Corps, Nigeria to organize a series of facilitated dialogues in various local government areas (LGAs) of Kaduna and Plateau States. In Kaduna, the LGA's, included Kaduna South, Igabi, Kauru, and Zango Kataf, from January 24 to 27, 2024. While in Plateau, the event took place in Jos South and Jos North LGAs. These dialogue sessions saw a total of 494 participants from the mentioned LGAs of Kaduna and Plateau states, including 20 Persons with Disabilities (PwDs).

The main objective of these dialogue forums was to empower communities to prevent violence and foster social cohesion through joint Community Action Planning (CAP), focusing specifically on addressing community needs and sources of tension. The facilitated dialogues, influenced by the principles of Interest-Based Negotiation and Mediation (IBNM) training, offered a space for community stakeholders to come together and discuss the root causes of tension, as well as to offer solutions aimed at mitigating it. In the communities of Plateau and Kaduna States that were involved, drug and substance abuse emerged as a notable factor contributing to violent conflicts and criminal activities. Participants suggested specific interventions and awareness initiatives to address this issue effectively.





## Women-Led Resource Mapping

The PARTNER activity committed to promoting gender equity and social inclusion engaged a total of 87 women from the PARTNER intervention sites in tier 1 states of Kaduna and Plateau through a women-led Resource Mapping and needs assessment on January 17 and 19, 2024. 40 women were engaged in Bible Faith/Rafin Pa, Jos North LGA of Plateau State and 47 women from Kabala- West in Kaduna South LGA of Kaduna state. The women-led resource mapping and needs assessment employed a participatory approach aimed at analyzing the linkages between resources and conflict, identifying shared needs and opportunities to facilitate peace and support the development of a gender sensitive Community Action Plan (CAP). The initiative focused on creating safe spaces, promoting inclusivity and enhancing the decision-making processes of communities in addressing gender disparities deeply rooted in patriarchal norms and cultural beliefs. The safe space provided by PARTNER for community women to deliberate and share their experiences, was utilized to garner critical issues affecting women in the community. Addressing these concerns is essential to fostering a more equitable and supportive community environment, which promotes the overall well-being and social cohesion.



Some of the key issues identified during the resource mapping were as follows:

**Gender Bias and Inequality:** Participants underscored how gender bias negatively affects the mental well-being of community members, especially women. They described how pervasive gender-based attitudes result in psychological harm for women, highlighting the community's struggle with ingrained biases that devalue women and hinder their involvement in decision-making processes, ultimately impeding efforts towards equity and inclusivity.

**Exclusion of Women from Opportunities:** Participants emphasized systemic barriers preventing women from accessing various opportunities in the community. This widespread issue hampers the community's overall progress by limiting women's meaningful contributions and perpetuating inequality.

**"Women often lack adequate platforms to address their issues, and now that the PARTNER activity has provided a platform, it is imperative for women to speak up. Without your voices, these issues will persist without resolution." - Community Stakeholder, Bible Faith/Rafin Pa, Plateau State**

**Youth Unemployment:** The discussion spotlighted the problem of youth unemployment, with participants expressing concerns about the risks associated with limited job prospects. They noted that youth engagement in criminal activities not only threatens their future but also contributes to community insecurity.

**Educational Limitations:** Evidence revealed a scarcity of government schools in the Kabala West community of Kaduna South LGA, with only one secondary school catering exclusively to boys. This educational shortfall results in many children discontinuing their education, primarily due to financial constraints. Female community representatives advocated for increased educational opportunities in the area.

**Domestic Violence:** Participants highlighted the widespread occurrence of domestic violence within homes, often in the presence of children, posing significant risks for various developmental and mental health issues, including learning difficulties for children.



## Launch of Guidelines for the Localization of Nigeria's National Action Plan



the objectives of the event were meticulously crafted to address critical aspects of advancing the Women, Peace, and Security (WPS) and Youth, Peace, and Security (YPS) agendas within the Nigerian context. These objectives were outlined to guide the activities and discussions throughout the event, ensuring a focused approach towards achieving meaningful outcomes. The primary aim of the event was to raise awareness about the newly developed Guidelines for the Localization of Nigeria's National Action Plan on UNSCR 1325. By disseminating these guidelines, participants were equipped with the necessary tools and resources to effectively localize the principles of UNSCR 1325 within their respective communities. Others included: Consolidate Knowledge on WPS and YPS Agendas Amongst Young Women; Enhance Leadership and Peacebuilding Capacities of Young Women; Provide a Platform for Strategizing Contributions to Implementing NAPs on WPS and YPS.

The methodology employed for the events were carefully designed to encouragement participation and knowledge sharing, and included, Presentations and Plenary Sessions; Group Discussions and Practical Exercises; Hybrid Training Approach; Cascade Model

WANEP-Nigeria, with support from the Global Network of Women Peacebuilders (GNWP) and Global Affairs Canada, convened a significant event aimed at advancing the localization of UNSCR 1325 in Nigeria. The event held a two-fold agenda: firstly, to launch the Guidelines for the Localization of Nigeria's National Action Plan on UNSCR 1325 and Related Resolutions on Women, Peace, and Security (WPS), designed to equip local actors with practical and contextual strategies for implementing the resolution. Secondly, a Workshop for Young Women+ Leaders for Peace on the Localization of WPS and YPS (Youth, Peace, and Security) Strategy in Nigeria was organised to empower and engage young women leaders in the peacebuilding process.

These events convened an array of esteemed stakeholders, including the Honourable Minister of Women Affairs, representatives from the United Nations, GNWP, media practitioners, and young women leaders actively engaged in grassroots initiatives aimed at advancing women's roles in peacebuilding, aligning with the principles of UNSCR 1325.



The event unfolded in two significant phases, each tailored to fulfil distinct yet interconnected objectives. Firstly, the launch of the Guidelines for Localization marked a pivotal moment in advancing the Women, Peace, and Security (WPS) agenda, equipping participants with actionable strategies. Subsequently, the training component provided an immersive learning experience, leveraging a hybrid approach to engage participants both in-person and online. Together, these activities fostered enriched discussions and experiential learning opportunities.

Dr. Bridget Osakwe, National Network Coordinator of WANEP Nigeria, during the event, emphasized the importance of localizing the UN Resolution to ensure its effective implementation across communities in Nigeria. Dr. Osakwe highlighted the role of women in conflict prevention, resolution, and peacebuilding, stressing the need to protect women and girls during armed conflicts and post-conflict situations. She emphasized the significance of the Localization Guidelines in providing practical strategies for developing action plans at the local level, empowering women leaders to take proactive measures towards peace and security.

**The Minister of Women Affairs, Hon. Uju Kennedy-Ohaneye at the event, emphasized the government's commitment to empowering vulnerable women through sustainable initiatives, including economic empowerment and skills acquisition programs.**





## Focus Group Discussion Workshops in Kaduna and Plateau State

Between March 19th and 27th, 2024, a pivotal Focus Group Discussion (FGD) workshop was convened in Kaduna and Plateau States, gathering 30 participants each from the Nigerian Police Force and the Nigeria Security and Civil Defence Corps. The workshop aimed to delve into the root causes of intercommunal violence and explore strategies for effective conflict mitigation and community policing. The findings of the FGD shed light on several crucial factors contributing to intercommunal violence in Nigeria. These include deep-seated ethnic and religious tensions, disputes over land, youth restiveness, and political interference. These insights underscore the intricate socio-political landscape within Nigerian communities, where historical grievances and identity-based conflicts often exacerbate tensions. Participants from both law enforcement agencies identified common challenges in responding to intercommunal violence. These include limited resources, communication barriers, and legal constraints. Notably, the lack of trust between communities and law enforcement agencies emerged as a significant hurdle to effective conflict resolution.

Despite these challenges, there was unanimous agreement on the necessity of collaborative efforts among law enforcement agencies, community leaders, and other stakeholders to address intercommunal tensions. Key strategies identified include early warning systems, proactive community engagement, and enhanced interagency cooperation. In conclusion, the FGD emphasized the need for a comprehensive approach to addressing intercommunal violence in Plateau and Kaduna States. This approach must tackle root causes, bolster institutional preparedness, and nurture community resilience. While significant challenges lie ahead, there is a shared recognition of the importance of proactive measures and policy reforms in fostering lasting peace and social cohesion in the region.

## Success Stories

### Barakallahu, Igabi Local Government, Kaduna

Barakallahu Community in Igabi Local Government area of Kaduna State had been grappling with the challenge of drug and illicit substance abuse for a long time.

However, the transformation of the community began with the collaborative development of the Community Peace Action Plan (PAP). This milestone was achieved through the establishment of community-based structures like the Early Warning and Monitoring Response Groups (EWMRGs) and Community-Based Response Committees (CBRCs) under the PARTNER program. Following EWER training in May 2023, the PAP was created to address various community concerns, focusing primarily on peace and security issues.

The initiative to rehabilitate illicit drug/substance users as identified in the community's PAPs stands as a testament to the profound impact of PARTNER, acknowledging its pivotal role in fostering communal peace and social cohesion.

A key initiative in the PAP is Barakallahu's effort to rehabilitate those struggling with drug abuse, highlighting the PARTNER program's impact on promoting communal peace. The EWMRG and CBRC played a vital role in addressing drug abuse by engaging with young users to understand their motivations, often linked to limited educational opportunities.

In response, the community established two literacy classes, supported by contributions from women, to address the educational needs of drug users. During a dialogue session in January 2024, community members noted a decline in drug abuse among youths, with some transitioning to alternative vocations or enrolling in schools, facilitated by the PARTNER program's innovative approach.



**Staff Recruitment: In the reporting period, WANEP-Nigeria recruited three (3) key technical positions at the Lagos Office including the Operations Manager, Internal Auditor and Human Resource/Administrative. The recruitment of key personnel aims to strengthen the operational effectiveness of WANEP-Nigeria.**



## Success Stories

### Bible Faith/Rafin Pa, Jos North LGA of Plateau State

In an effort to reduce the risk of increased violence during the rerun of state elections on February 4, 2024, conducted by the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) for Plateau North Senatorial District and Bassa/Jos North Federal Constituency in Plateau State, women from the community-based organization in Bible Faith/Rafin Pa initiated a project called "Breaking the Borders." This project aimed to promote peaceful conduct among young people, particularly during the elections. Blessing Emmanuel, the Public Relations Officer (PRO) of the PARTNER coordinating committee in the Bible Faith/Rafin Pa intervention site, explained the concept behind "Breaking the Borders," highlighting that it originated from joint meetings among women facilitated by the PARTNER program. The initiative involved creating cardboard signs with positive messages to educate community members about the importance of peaceful elections. Women from Christian communities ventured into Muslim areas, and vice versa, in an unprecedented show of solidarity and cooperation.

These accounts demonstrate the transformative influence of collaboration, resilience, and a shared dedication to effecting positive change. From the inception of the PARTNER program to the tangible results observed in PARTNER communities, these stories underscore the crucial role of local involvement and collective efforts in driving lasting change and nurturing inclusive societies.



### USAID Visit: Organizational Capacity Assessment, Lagos



Key staff from USAID, the funding organization for PARTNER Program paid a visit to WANEP-Nigeria's head office in Lagos during this period. The visit was to conduct an organizational Capacity Assessment aimed at strengthening the capacity of WANEP-Nigeria as a sub Awardee on the PARTNER Program. Present at the meeting was staff from Mercy Corps, Nigeria.

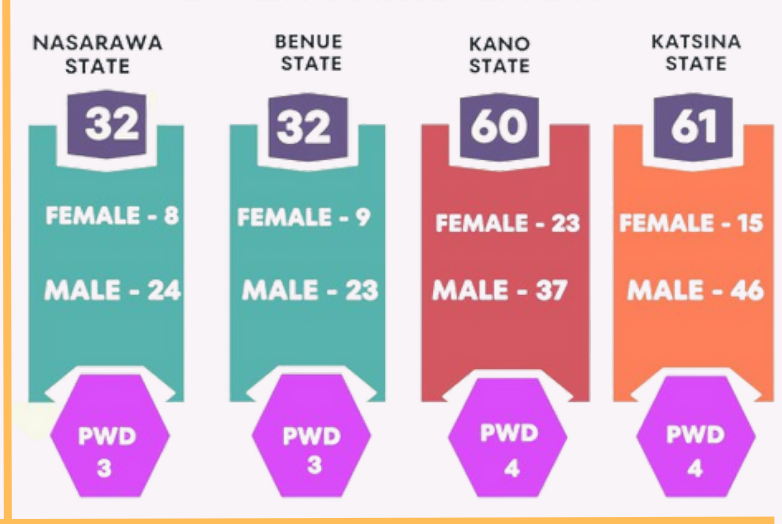


## Early Warning and Early Response (EWER) training workshops in Kano, Katsina, Benue, and Nasarawa States

The PARTNER consortium, led by WANEP-Nigeria in collaboration with the Independent State Peace Architectures (ISPAs) and Mambayya House, organized training workshops on Early Warning and Early Response (EWER) in Kano, Katsina, Benue, and Nasarawa States from February 5 - 7, 2024. The main goal was to enhance the knowledge and capabilities of established community structures under PARTNER - the Early Warning Monitoring and Reporting Groups (EWMRGs) and Community-Based Reconciliation Committees (CBRCs) - regarding early warning and early response mechanisms. The training also emphasized the importance of gender inclusion in peacebuilding efforts.

Furthermore, the training aimed to develop strategies to foster collaborative and sustainable peace initiatives. This involved creating community-specific Peace Action Plans and establishing an inclusive coordinating mechanism to oversee the activities of these community structures. A total of 185 participants (130 males and 55 females) from six Local Government Areas (LGAs) in tier 2 states attended the workshops. Among them, 14 were Persons with Disabilities (PwDs). Below is the breakdown of participants by demographic data.

### EWER PARTICIPANTS



## Conflict Sensitive Media Engagement in Lagos

As part of efforts towards enhancing the skills and knowledge of media practitioners in conflict-sensitive reporting, Mercy Corps Nigeria in conjunction with WANEP-Nigeria with support from USAID/Nigeria, under the PARTNER program hosted a media workshop aimed at bolstering conflict-sensitive reporting skills among media practitioners in Lagos. This workshop was a crucial step towards promoting responsible journalism and fostering peacebuilding efforts in our communities.

### Workshop Details:

**Focus:** Conflict-Sensitive Reporting  
**Hosts:** Mercy Corps - Nigeria in partnership with WANEP-Nigeria  
**The Objective of the workshop** included equipping media practitioners with the tools for Do No Harm and knowledge necessary for reporting on conflict situations sensitively and constructively. During the workshop, participants delved into crucial topics surrounding conflict reporting, including:  
 Understanding the ethical considerations and challenges inherent in reporting on conflict. Exploring the role of media in peacebuilding and conflict resolution. Practical exercises and case studies to enhance skills in conflict-sensitive reporting.





## Birthday celebrant



Sylvia Oyakhilome  
MARCH 15

## ABOUT US

The West Africa Network for Peacebuilding (WANEP) was established in 1998 as a regional Civil Society Organization focused on conflict prevention and peacebuilding in West Africa. With its headquarters in Accra, Ghana, WANEP has formed strong national networks in the 15 ECOWAS Member States, comprising over 750 member organizations in the region.

WANEP aims to foster collaborative relationships among peacebuilding organizations to prevent and resolve conflicts. Its expertise lies in facilitating structural and social reforms by providing a platform for concerted efforts among West African societies.

In Nigeria, WANEP-Nigeria was established and registered in 2001 and 2003, respectively, serving as an organized platform for indigenous Non-Governmental Organizations to collaborate on peacebuilding, conflict transformation, and development. Operating through a network membership structure, WANEP-Nigeria provides technical support to its members across all 36 states of Nigeria and the Federal Capital Territory (FCT-Abuja), while encouraging the development of context-specific intervention strategies.

The network's key focus areas include Women in Peacebuilding Network (WIPNET), Early Warning and Response, Active Non-violence and Peace Education, Democracy and Good Governance, and Research and Documentation.



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