



Working for your rights

Thematic Priorities 2014-2017

Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights
West Africa Regional Office



UNITED NATIONS
HUMAN RIGHTS
WEST AFRICA REGIONAL OFFICE

OUR TEAM



FOREWORD



In the past year, developments in the West African region have been dominated by consequences of the various crises the Sahel is facing, including the Malian crisis. Indeed, several countries of the sub-region have been affected by election-related tensions, and in particular by the Malian political situation and related security issues. Furthermore, security and political challenges inter-related with humanitarian and developmental issues, as well as adverse effects of climatic and ecological changes, add to the complexity of the situation. These factors have resulted in a humanitarian crisis which affects most West African countries, especially in the Sahel region.

Moreover, the inability of governments to supply basic services, promote constitutional governance and establish a continued culture of impunity, in combination with grievances over the unequal distribution of state resources, have all contributed to a high level of mistrust between citizens and political leaders. This mistrust erodes the states' legitimacy, and undermines the enjoyment of basic human rights in many countries of the sub-region.

The work of the Regional Office for West Africa of the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR/WARO) is thereby in line with the larger response elaborated by the international community to face regional challenges. In particular, it is in full adherence with the recognition by the United Nations that strengthening of state institutions, inclusive economic and social development, respect for human rights and the rule of law are necessary to ensure long-term security, development and stability in the sub region.

In this regard, the office is fully engaged in the implementation of the UN Integrated Strategy for the Sahel to ensure, along with other UN agencies, a coherent, comprehensive and coordinated approach. Through the five fields of governance, security, humanitarian, human rights and developmental aspects, the root causes of the challenges described above are addressed. Other main priorities include the necessity of advancing women's rights in the sub region, the support of journalists in order to effectively promote the right to freedom of expression, the empowerment of vulnerable groups and especially LGBT, people with disabilities, and children to make sure they effectively enjoy their rights, as well as the reinforcement of National Human Rights Institutions (NHRI) and civil society organisations participating in public fora and monitoring human rights processes.

The various human rights needs we have identified have been prioritized for the next 4 years. The 5 thematic priorities and the 12 objectives are our firm commitment of our ultimate goal of promoting and protecting all human rights for everyone in West Africa.

Andrea Ori
Regional OHCHR Representative for West Africa

OUR ACTION

REGIONAL LEVEL

**FOCUS ON PRIORITY
COUNTRIES**

**COLLABORATION WITH
OHCHR FIELD
PRESENCES**

Operational since September 2008, the Regional Office for West Africa of the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR/WARO) is the main UN institution in charge of the protection and promotion of human rights in West Africa. The office is headquartered in Dakar, Senegal.

Over the past years, WARO consolidated its expertise in the field of human rights promotion and protection, as well as in mainstreaming of human rights into UN programmes.



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The last political developments in Mali have shown positive advancements in terms of electoral processes with the Presidential and Legislative elections that took place during 2013

A response to regional challenges

Strategically the office feeds in to the larger response that the international community and the UN have elaborated to face regional challenges. This response includes the establishment of new mechanisms and policies to act upon the cross-border issues of political, security, human rights, humanitarian and environmental concerns. The need to find ways to collectively deal with these issues will certainly continue to drive the work of the international community for the next 5-10 years.

Through a consolidated partnership

Human rights perspectives and issues have been channelled through a consolidated partnership with UN agencies and funds. This has resulted in overcoming existing knowledge and capacity gaps and thus rendering UN activities more effective from a human rights perspective. Furthermore, WARO's involvement in UN coordination structures at the regional level offered new avenues for the creation of partnerships and provision of support for human rights policy issues. The strengthening cooperation with the ECOWAS Commission and the Community Court of Justice also opens new perspectives in this field.

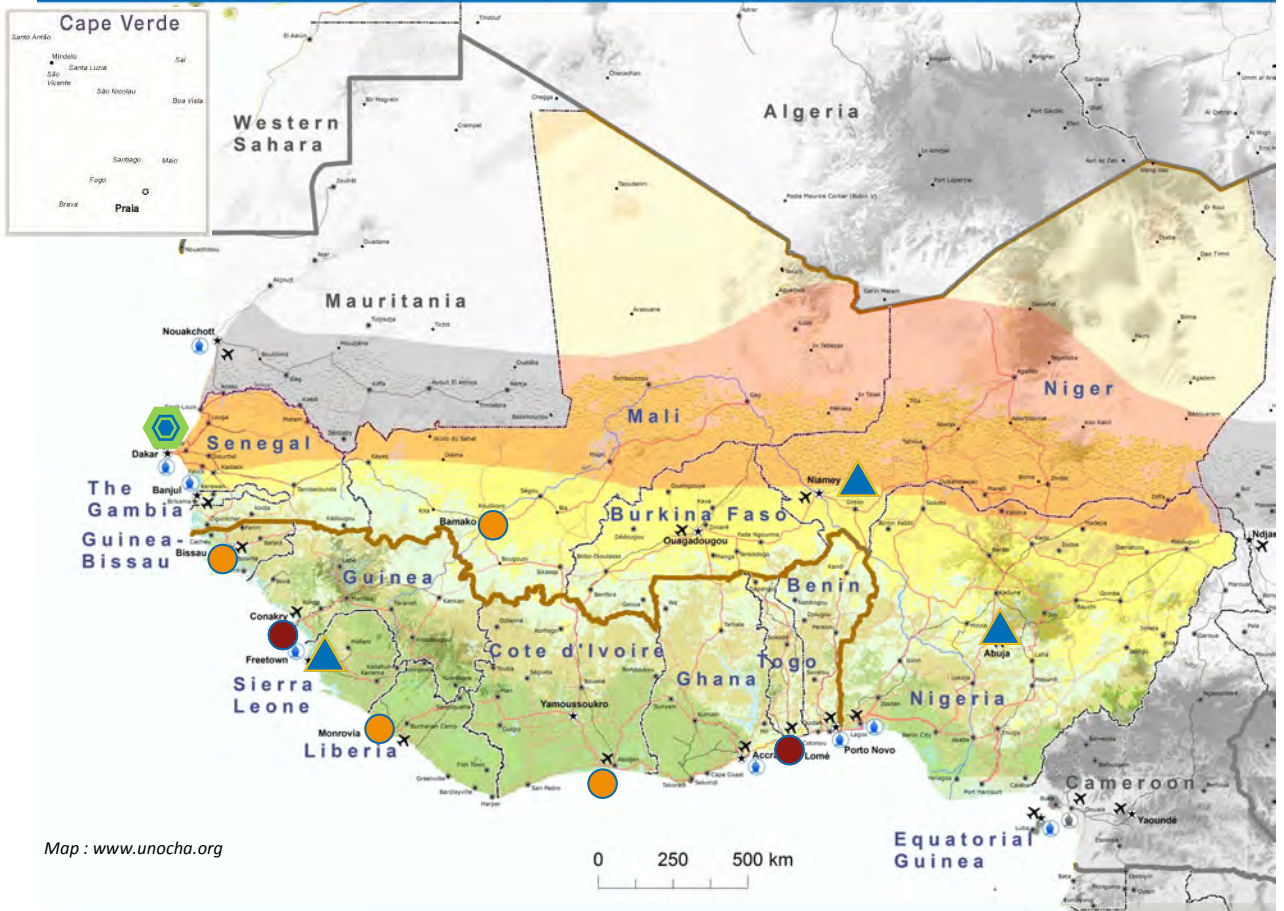
Strengthening Civil Society Organizations

Strategic and ineluctable partners for WARO are the numerous civil society organisations and NGOs in the region that work on the promotion and protection of human rights. This partnership resulted in conducting training sessions, human rights awareness campaigns, and supporting advocacy for the ratification of international human rights instruments.

West African Network










The office contributed to the establishment of the West African Network of National Human Rights Institutions (NNHRI) providing technical expertise and financial support to its secretariat and it has started a regional capacity building workshop for NNHRI. This initiative, funded by OSIWA, is conducted under WARO's coordination and with participation of OHCHR country presences.

OHCHR West Africa Field Presences



Map : www.unocha.org

The boundaries and names shown and the designations used on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the United Nations.

Human Rights components of peace missions	Human rights advisers in United Nations Country Teams	Country Office
<ul style="list-style-type: none">  UNIOGBIS, Guinea Bissau  UNMIL, Liberia  ONUCI, Côte d'Ivoire  MINUSMA, Mali 	<ul style="list-style-type: none">  Niger  Nigeria  Sierra Leone (former under UNIPSIL) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none">  Guinea  Togo

West Africa Regional Office (WARO)

WARO works in close collaboration with the nine human rights field presences in the sub-region: the UN peace and political missions in Côte d'Ivoire (ONUCI), Guinea Bissau (UNIOGBIS), Liberia (UNMIL) and Mali (MINUSMA), the human rights advisers in Niger, Sierra Leone and Nigeria and the country offices in Guinea and Togo. WARO has also close working relations with the human rights divisions of the United Nations Office for West Africa (UNOWA).

Despite its regional mandate, WARO operates directly in 5 priority countries where OHCHR has no field presence: the Gambia, Cape Verde, Burkina Faso, Benin and Senegal. In Senegal, WARO operates as a country office.

OUR ACTION

5 PRIORITY COUNTRIES

BENIN
BURKINA FASO
CAPE VERDE
THE GAMBIA
SENEGAL

The Office also established cooperative relationships and operates directly in 5 priority countries: the Gambia, Cape Verde, Burkina Faso, Benin and Senegal. In Senegal, WARO operates as a country of-fice. In these countries, WARO develops and strengthens capacity at the national level for the promotion and protection of human rights in accordance with international norms.

SUPPORT THE IMPLEMENTATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS STANDARDS



National Human Rights Institutions (here during the reinstitutionalization of the Senegalese Committee of human rights) are playing a crucial role in promoting and monitoring the effective implementation of international human rights standards at the national level.

Ratification of international human rights instruments

WARO has contributed to this growing support for the ratification of international human rights instruments, specifically the Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights) and the Second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. In 2012, a regional conference was organized in Dakar in partnership with UNOWA and UNWOMEN. Participants including representatives from ministries of justice, foreign affairs, national human rights institutions and CSOs developed roadmaps towards the ratification of these human rights instruments. As a result, there is a growing consensus on the justifiability of economic, social and cultural rights.

Implementation of human rights standards

WARO has greatly contributed to the organization of regional and national workshops, and has provided technical expertise and advice for the establishment and reorganization of National Human Rights Institutions (NHRI's) and other national bodies in accordance with international human rights standards (Paris Principles). This support has resulted in the improvement of national protection systems, and has enhanced the monitoring, protection, and promotion of human rights.



WARO has supported initiatives aimed at harmonizing national legislation with international human rights standards.

Harmonizing national legislation

West African states are signatories to many international and regional treaties. However, the enforcement and application of the international dispositions is far from being included into national legislation and traditions. For instance, women often face discrimination and gender based violence is widespread. WARO has supported initiatives aimed at harmonizing national legislation with international human rights standards. Several national legislations have been reformed - amended with the technical assistance of WARO to bring them in conformity with the ratified treaties and conventions - to protect women's rights and promote gender equality.

MONITORING OF HUMAN RIGHTS SITUATION



Free Legal consultation at the prison in Rufisque in partnership with AJS, The consultation helps to meet women in custody and to assist them in monitoring their file.

Women's rights

WARO has contributed to the establishment in Senegal and Mali of women's coalitions to better represent and defend women's rights and needs during the electoral periods. These coalitions continued their work after the elections and are mainstreaming women's issues into policies and national legislation. The same experience was proposed by the office to countries that held elections, such as Guinea Conakry, and women coalitions were established accordingly.

WARO technically supported the Malian women platform to find strategies to ensure transparent, non-violent and inclusive elections with the effective participation of women during all stages of the electoral process.

Visit to detention centers

Official visits to detention center organized with the objective to accompany the National Observatory of Places of Detention (ONLPL), allowed to better assess the condition of detained persons in Senegal. The delegation was presented the opportunity to meet some of the detainees individually and privately, allowing the latter to share their concerns in confidentiality. WARO's cooperation with the ONLPL will be reinforced, as well as its presence in the places of detention in Senegal. WARO, in partnership with Women Jurists Association (AJS), also conducted free legal consultations in women's prison.



OUR ACTION

MAINSTREAMING HUMAN RIGHTS

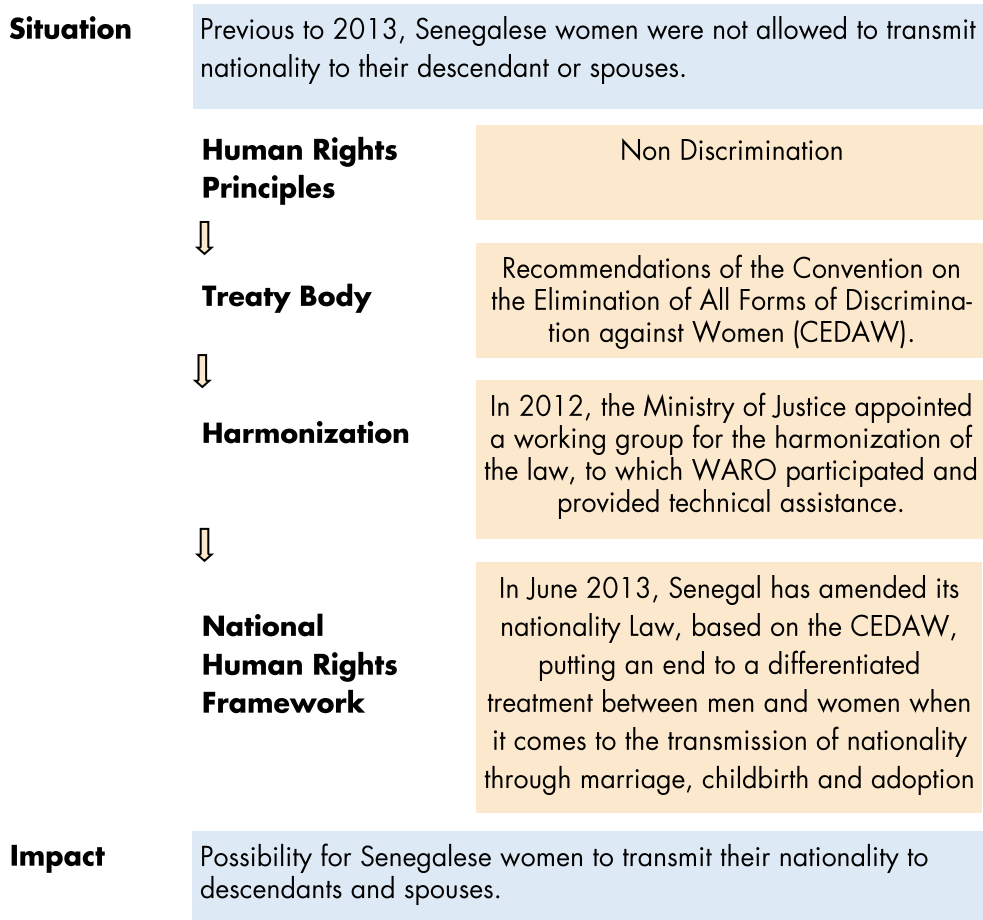
PARTICIPATION & INCLUSION EQUALITY & NON DISCRIMINATION ACCOUNTABILITY & RULE OF LAW

The Office also works to mainstream human rights in all areas of its work, both within and outside the United Nations, including development, peace and security, and humanitarian affairs. Mainstreaming human rights seeks to analyse inequalities which lie at the heart of development problems and redresses discriminatory practices and unjust distributions of power that impede development progress.

STRENGTHEN THE CAPACITY OF STATES TO MEET THEIR OBLIGATIONS

Example of a positive cycle to combat discrimination in Senegal

- ◆ In Senegal, WARO contributed with coherent and sustained advocacy in all stages of the legislative process of the new "nationality law", which gives the possibility to Senegalese women to transmit their nationality to descendants and spouses.



STRENGTHEN OUR COOPERATION WITH UNITED NATIONS PARTNERS

UN Integrated Strategy for the Sahel

The office has actively contributed to the integration of human rights in the UN Integrated Strategy for the Sahel. The Sahel Integrated Strategy document is a road map for WARO's engagement in UN interagency humanitarian planning and actions for the Sahel region.

OHCHR/WARO is part of the three Regional Working Groups in Dakar corresponding to the three main pillars of the strategy:

- governance
- security
- resilience

In the framework of the implementation of the UN Integrated Strategy for the Sahel, WARO coordinated the completion of a matrix by the field presences of OHCHR in the sub region including Mauritania and

Chad, with the view to better coordinate our intervention. Most of the strategic interventions of OHCHR are in goal 1 of the Strategy (Governance).

WARO identified regional strategic interventions, including advocacy and capacity building initiatives, to be led in strong collaboration with regional stakeholders, notably ECOWAS, the African Commission on human and people's right and the Network of National Human rights Institutions (NNHRI) in West Africa.

WARO ensured that human rights standards and principles were integrated into all documents elaborated by the three Regional Working Groups. Also, it contributed with concept notes concerning the support of the West African Regional Network of National Human Rights Institutions and the justice accessibility and effectiveness to protect human rights in the Sahel Region more efficiently.



On 5 July 2012, the Security Council adopted resolution 2056 requesting the Secretary-General to develop and implement, in consultation with regional organisations, a United Nations Integrated Strategy for the Sahel region, encompassing security, governance, development, human rights and humanitarian issues. The strategy is being coordinated by UNOWA in Dakar.

THEMATIC PRIORITIES

5 PRIORITIES

12 EXPECTED
ACCOMPLISHMENTS

BY THE END OF 2017

WARO has translated its mandate into 5 thematic priorities and 12 identifiable changes. These global expected accomplishments outline the behavioural, institutional or legislative gaps of rights-holders and duty-bearers, which the office aims to address.



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To achieve these results, WARO will intensify its work with governments, parliamentary committees, National Human Rights Institutions and national NGOs to advocate for countries HR treaty reporting obligations.

WARO will continue to provide technical support for the creation of national mechanisms in charge of monitoring the implementation of recommendations from international and regional mechanisms.

WIDENING DEMOCRATIC SPACE

Widening democratic space by increasing participation of civil society, including women and discriminated groups in public life.



COUNTERING DISCRIMINATION

Enhancing equality and countering discrimination, in particular racial discrimination, discrimination on the grounds of sex, religion, and against others who are marginalized.



CONFLICT, VIOLENCE AND INSECURITY

Early warning and protection of human rights in situations of conflict, violence and insecurity.



HUMAN RIGHTS MECHANISMS

Strengthening the effectiveness of international human rights mechanisms and the progressive development of international human rights law and standards.



DEVELOPMENT AND ECONOMIC SPHERE

Integrating human rights standards and principles in development and in the economic sphere.



WIDENING DEMOCRATIC SPACE

HUMAN RIGHTS EDUCATION
WITH A FOCUS ON YOUTH

HUMAN RIGHTS
DEFENDERS

PARTICIPATION
IN PUBLIC LIFE

PUBLIC FREEDOMS
(FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION,
ASSEMBLY AND ASSOCIATION)



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Senegalese women protest in Dakar during the Presidential elections in 2012.

Most West African countries have been engaged for several years in a process of democratization and opening up the spaces of freedom. In this perspective, legal provisions have been revised towards liberalization and public liberties. These changes favoured the emergence and expansion of a dynamic public space in which citizens are more free and better capable to express themselves.

A wide range of civil society actors are playing increasingly important roles in the public sphere.

Besides activities in development and service delivery, they are progressively focusing their actions on facilitating citizen participation, monitoring public policy, demanding accountability of state actors, and advocating for a greater respect of human rights.

Nevertheless, many of these important non-governmental players in the human rights domain would benefit greatly from capacity building, improved access to resources, and the facilitation of platforms and networks on both a national and a regional level. Also, increased consultation and cooperation between governments and civil society actors could facilitate the implementation and monitoring of recommendations from human rights mechanisms.

Despite this progress, permanent threats to these freedoms were also noted. Trends to restrict public liberties have been identified in the sub region, particularly in the context of electoral processes.

**Civil society actors
are playing
increasingly
important roles in
the public sphere.**

Our Work

- ◆ WARO, in collaboration with the Senegalese Women Jurists Association, regularly organizes free legal consultations to provide legal aid and advice for the most vulnerable. The complexity of legal language and legal procedures are barriers to access to justice for people, especially for women, which keeps them in a position of vulnerability.

Most of the West African countries are characterized by a low representation rate of women in decision-making (percentages oscillate between 15% and 7% Women in the National Assembly). The only exception are Senegal and Cape Verde.



- ◆ WARO provided technical assistance for the implementation of the parity law for the national assembly in Senegal. Since the 2012 elections, 43% of the Assembly is comprised of female parliamentarians. Other countries in the region are showing similar initiatives. The office continues to support and train the Senegalese female parliamentarians in their role of promoting human rights, and, for instance, has provided training in human rights budgeting analysis.
- ◆ In Senegal, WARO contributed to improve the ability of journalists to address human rights topics and to respect human rights principles in the information processing by organizing capacity building sessions in collaboration with UNESCO.

Our Objectives

By the end of 2017, WARO expects to have contributed to the following accomplishments :

#1 – All citizens, with a major focus on women and discriminated groups, increasingly participate in public life at the national and local level in the five WARO focus countries (e.g. in parliament and local institutions).

#2 – Civil society, in particular the youth, and women, increasingly advocate and claim their rights and protect themselves more effectively from reprisals, among others through the use of human rights instruments and international human rights mechanisms.

#3 – National Human Rights Institutions (NHRI) are established and functioning in accordance with Paris Principles in the five WARO priority countries.

COUNTERING DISCRIMINATION

MINORITIES
MIGRANTS
STREET CHILDREN
RACIAL AND RELIGIOUS
POOR
WOMEN
PEOPLE WITH
DISABILITIES
LGBT
SEXUAL
ORIENTATION



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Important gaps to gender equality still exist in national legislations as well as in private (family code) and public life such as women's access to both civil/political and social, economic and cultural rights.

Discrimination based on race, ethnicity, religion, gender and sexual orientation is still an issue in West Africa. Women do not fully enjoy the same rights and the same opportunities as men. This finding is common to all the countries of the West African region with different scales of inequalities. Above and beyond, violence against women continues to be recurrent and a major obstacle to their development.

Disabled people are facing strong social exclusion and blatant discrimination patterns. There are many difficulties that impede social and economic participation of people with disabilities. A vast majority of migrants,

especially the irregular and undocumented migrants, are facing racism, xenophobia and other chronic forms of discrimination. Over the past years, recurrent crises in the sub-region have increased the number of migrants in difficult economic situations. In many countries in the West African sub-region, homosexuality is criminalized, LGBT (lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender) are strongly discriminated against in society and often targeted by the media. Even if not criminalized,

LGBT persons often face legal issues not experienced by non-LGBT citizens. Moreover, societal discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity remains a problem.

The most discriminated are the poor, women, persons with disabilities, ethnic and religious minorities, migrants and LGBT

Our Work

- ◆ In Senegal, WARO successfully contributed both to the national report and parallel report of NGO's to the CEDAW (the last report was submitted in 1994) and technically and financially supported the process from the elaboration to the validation and submission of the document.
- ◆ WARO participated into awareness raising activities aiming at enhancing access of women to economic and social rights. WARO provided technical advice on the discrimination challenges remaining in national legislation (e. g.: revision the Mining Code in order to include a gender and a human rights perspective on its review; Family code; National Strategy on Equity and gender Equality (SNEEG).) which are to be harmonized with international human rights standards.

With the goal of building a society devoid of discrimination, WARO organized human rights awareness raising campaign to promote participation of the most vulnerable groups of society such as people with disabilities.



Our Objectives

By the end of 2017, WARO expects to have contributed to the following accomplishments :

#4— National laws comply with regional and international standards on anti-discrimination and equality in all five priority countries (Burkina Faso, Cape Verde, The Gambia, Senegal, Benin).

#5—Judicial procedures are simplified to improve access to justice for discriminated groups (in particular migrants, persons with disabilities, women and LGBT) in Senegal.

CONFLICT, VIOLENCE AND INSECURITY

SEXUAL GENDER
BASED VIOLENCE

HUMAN RIGHTS IN
HUMANITARIAN ACTION

IMPUNITY

HUMAN RIGHTS
DUE DILIGENCE

SECURITY
OF THE
PERSON

INVESTIGATIONS,
MONITORING
AND REPORTING

CONFLICT



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In Mali, since the crisis, instability in the north of the country has resulted in the displacement of many people, including people who sought refuge in neighbouring countries.

The human rights situation in West Africa is being affected by political instability and insecurity, as well as by the growing threat of terrorism and election-related tensions.

Violent religious extremism and terrorism seem to be spreading throughout West Africa. Piracy and armed robbery in the Gulf of Guinea remains a threat to the security and economic activities of the affected countries. Drug seizures in the sub-region have confirmed that West Africa remains a transit point for illicit drug trafficking.

In relation to humanitarian affairs, the situation in the Sahel remains precarious and continues to affect the socioeconomic environment in the region. The most affected by the conflict violence

and insecurity remain the most vulnerable populations, among them women, children, ethnic and religious minorities, refugees and IDPs, people with disabilities and people living in poor remote areas. The main duty bearers to ensure the protection of human rights while dealing with consequences of conflict and widespread violence are the West African states. As sovereign states, the fifteen ECOWAS members

have the responsibility to prevent conflict and violence, and provide protection for the population. Their obligations in terms of promotion and protection of human rights during periods of conflict and violence result from their regional and international commitments.

**The most vulnerable
populations are the
most affected by
the conflict violence**

Our Work

- ◆ At the regional level, with the West African NHRI Network, WARO provided a briefing on the ECOWAS Court of Justice Procedure. WARO, with the financial support of OSIWA, also supports the members of the NHRI Network, with training sessions on human rights monitoring, in collaboration with the field presences in the sub-region.
- ◆ Within the framework of the UN Integrated Strategy for the Sahel, a strong partnership with regional and sub-regional organizations will be established. This calls for an exchange of information on human rights violations between our office and ECOWAS. The objective is the exchange of information on human rights violations between WARO and ECOWAS to ensure that critical human rights issues raised by WARO in the region, especially in the Sahel region, are taken into account by ECOWAS in a timely manner.
- ◆ In light of its mandate, WARO plays a substantial role in technically assisting the Extraordinary African Chambers created to prosecute international crimes committed in Chad between 7 June 1982 and 1 December 1990. WARO has been actively following the developments pertaining to the establishment and work of the Chambers, notably as Observer in the regular meetings of the Comité de pilotage. WARO's engagement with the African Chambers will continue with capacity-building activities on international human rights law, trial monitoring and outreach activities.

WARO provided technical and financial support to the drafting and publication of the National Action Plans in the subregion for the implementation of Security Council Resolution 1325 and 1820 on women, peace and security. This was the case in Burkina Faso and in The Gambia



Our Objectives

By the end of 2017, OHCHR expects to have contributed to the following accomplishments :

#6— Increased responsiveness and integration of human rights concerns into the international community response to potential, emerging or existing situations of conflict, violence and insecurity.

HUMAN RIGHTS MECHANISMS

ENGAGEMENT
BY STATES AND
RIGHTS-HOLDERS

ACCOUNTABILITY
COHERENCE AND
SYNERGIES

UNIVERSAL PERIODIC REVIEW (UPR)

REPORTING TO TREATY BODIES



© UN Photo/Marco Dormino

Compliance with national legislations and the engagement of States with international human rights mechanisms are at the heart of the human rights protection system.

Significant progress has been made in terms of ratification of international conventions (however, few countries have ratified some important Optional Protocols to Conventions). One of the greatest human rights challenges in the region is the implementation of the international instruments at the national level. This situation raises the question of the existence and well-functioning of national mechanisms for the protection and promotion of human rights, whose primary mission is to ensure the monitoring of the effective implementation of conventions as well as national laws. The first responsible for the promotion and protection of human rights are the governments and parliaments.

One of the greatest challenges is the implementation of the international instruments at the national level

In addition to these institutions, other existing national mechanisms also need to be established or increase their effectiveness, including national reporting mechanisms for treaty bodies.

The population in general, civil society organizations and national human rights institutions must be able to understand the meaning of human rights and be able to convey their requests to the state.

However, both the populations and national mechanisms in the subregion are poorly equipped materially, in terms of information, awareness and capacity to claim their rights and to hold state authorities responsible for their rights' enjoyment.

Our Work

- ◆ WARO has contributed to the growing support for the ratification of international human rights instruments through advocacy and the organisation of a regional conference which gathered participants from Burkina Faso, Cape Verde, Mali and Senegal. From the recommendations of this regional workshop, advocacy is ongoing by relevant stakeholders for the ratification of international human rights instruments.
- ◆ WARO contributed to increase the engagement of states of the sub-region to meet their reporting obligations to international human rights bodies through advocacy and by organizing training sessions.
- ◆ After participating at advocacy activities aiming at creating a national mechanism for the prevention of torture in Senegal, WARO provided support to the visit of the Subcommittee on Prevention of Torture (SPT) and supported the work of the newly appointed national mechanism against torture (financial support for a study visit and assistance in visiting detentions centers). WARO, in collaboration with ICRC, supported the publication of the annual report of the National Mechanism for the prevention of Torture and contributed to its divulgation to the public.

Our Objectives

- **OPICESCR** - *Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights*
- **OPICCPR-2** - *Second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights*
- **OP-CEDAW** - *Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women*
- **ICRMW** - *International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families*
- **CAT** - *Convention against Torture—(OPCAT - Optional Protocol)*
- **CRPD** - *Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities— (OPCRPD - Optional Protocol)*
- **CPPED** - *Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance*

By the end of 2017, WARO expects to have contributed to the following accomplishments :

#7— Increased ratification of international human rights instruments.

#8— Establishment (Benin, Cape Verde, The Gambia) and strengthening (Burkina Faso, Senegal) the national coordination mechanism in charge of monitoring the implementation of recommendations of international and regional mechanisms.

#9— Increased compliance of and engagement with international human rights mechanisms, such as the Universal Periodic Review (UPR).

#10—Increased number and diversity of rights-holders (including children, women and persons with disabilities) and of national human rights institutions and civil society actors acting on their behalf, making use of United Nations and regional human rights mechanisms and bodies.

#11— OHCHR informs the Human Rights Council on relevant Human Rights issues in the context of early warning efforts, most notably those related to the Sahel crisis, and the Human Rights Council responds timely to these issues.

DEVELOPMENT AND ECONOMIC SPHERE

LAND, WATER,
SANITATION
AND HOUSING RIGHTS

RIGHT TO HEALTH

RIGHT TO EDUCATION

RIGHT TO DEVELOPMENT

ECONOMIC, SOCIAL
AND CULTURAL RIGHTS

Post 2015-
DEVELOPMENT
AGENDA



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The sub-region hosts many of the world's least developed countries with many human rights concerns. According to the Human Development Report 2013, 13 of 15 States of ECOWAS are identified among the 42 states having "Low Human Development".

Despite a strong economic performance (with an average rate of growth around 7% in 2013), West African Countries continued to be affected by high levels of poverty, unequal distribution of national wealth and high rates of youth unemployment. Human development indicators are still, in some countries of the sub-region, among the lowest in the world. Access to education, health care, water, sanitation and housing, remain a big challenge to vulnerable groups in most of the West African countries. Apart from the necessity to protect human rights, there's also the need to ensure the realization of

economic, social and cultural rights by promoting the integration of human rights in humanitarian, development and poverty reduction efforts with a focus on the poorest and most marginalized groups of society. This work is guided by the principles of universality, indivisibility and interdependence of all human rights and fundamental freedoms. As one of the stakeholders, the UNCTs are required to support national priorities and to advocate that those national priorities include governments' international commitments and obligations under international human rights, norms and standards.

West African countries are committed through the International Covenant on Economic Cultural and Social Rights to the full realization of these rights

Our Work

- ◆ WARO has worked with UN partners to mainstream human rights in the work of UNCTs throughout the sub-region. In this respect, WARO has organized training sessions on the human rights- and gender-based approaches to humanitarian and development programming for several UN agencies and partners. The office has equally ensured that human rights concerns were taken into account in the development of the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) in Burkina Faso, Cape Verde, The Gambia and Senegal, and will continue to mainstream human rights in future strategic programming documents and policies of its partners.
- ◆ WARO has greatly participated in the elaboration of programming documents adopting a human rights based approach on raising awareness activities on international human rights and humanitarian legal frameworks and on the reinforcement of mechanisms and policies with the view to strengthen democratic principles, build justice and fight against impunity.

The UN Special Rapporteur on the right to food during a regional consultation in Dakar. This consultation gathered national authorities (parliamentarians), CSOs representatives as well as members from human rights institutions from Benin, Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, Mali, Niger, Senegal and Togo. Discussions allowed the identification of good practices and challenges in the region for the eradication of hunger.



Our Objectives

By the end of 2017, WARO expects to have contributed to the following accomplishments :

#12— Human rights standards and principles are increasingly integrated into UN documents such as Common Country Assessments (CCA), United Nations Development Assistance Frameworks (UNDAF), Consolidated Appeals Process (CAPs) and the work of UN agencies, particularly in the field of housing, water, sanitation and land.

OUR MISSION STATEMENT



The mission of the OHCHR is to work for the promotion and protection of all human rights for all people; to help empower people to realize their rights and to assist those responsible for upholding such rights in ensuring that they are implemented.



In carrying out its mission OHCHR will:

- Give priority to addressing the most pressing human rights violations, both acute and chronic, particularly those that put life in imminent peril.
- Focus attention on those who are at risk and vulnerable on multiple fronts.
- Pay equal attention to the realization of civil, cultural, economic, political, and social rights, including the right to development.
- Measure the impact of its work through the substantive benefit that is accrued through it to individuals around the world.

OHCHR, a part of the United Nations Secretariat, is guided in its work by the mandate provided by the General Assembly in resolution 48/141, the Charter of the United Nations, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and subsequent human rights instruments, the 1993 Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action, and the 2005 World Summit Outcome Document.

Operationally, OHCHR works with governments, legislatures, courts, national institutions, civil society, regional and international organizations, and the United Nations system to develop and strengthen capacity, particularly at the national level, for the promotion and protection of human rights in accordance with international norms.

Office of the United Nations High Commissioner
for Human Rights

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UNITED NATIONS
HUMAN RIGHTS
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