



**ECOWAS CAPACITY BUILDING
TRAINING PROGRAMMES ON
DIALOGUE AND MEDIATION**

**LESSONS
LEARNT AND
ASSESSMENT
STUDY**



ECOWAS CAPACITY BUILDING TRAINING PROGRAMMES ON DIALOGUE AND MEDIATION

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Supported by



Ecowas Capacity Building Training Programmes On Dialogue And Mediation

Lessons Learnt And Assessment Study

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Abbreviations And Acronyms

| | |
|-----------------|--|
| ADR | Alternative Dispute Resolution |
| CPAPS | Commissioner for Political Affairs, Peace and Security |
| CSOs | Civil Society Organisations |
| DPA | Directorate of Political Affairs |
| ECONEC | ECOWAS Network of Electoral Commissions |
| ECOWAS | Economic Community of West African States |
| ECPF | ECOWAS Conflict Prevention Framework |
| EMBs | Election Management Bodies |
| FBA | Folke Bernadotte Academy |
| FCT | Federal Capital Territory (Abuja) |
| FGD | Focus Group Discussions |
| FGM | Female Genital Mutilations |
| INEC | Independent National Electoral Commission |
| IPCR | Institute for Peace and Conflict Resolution |
| KIIs | Key Informant Interviews |
| LECIAD | Legon Centre for International Affairs and Diplomacy |
| LLAS | Lessons Learnt and Assessment Study |
| MFD | Mediation Facilitation Division |
| MINUSMA | United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilisation Mission in Mali |
| NGOs | Non-Governmental Organisations |
| REMUMA | Women Mediator Network of Guinea Bissau |
| SWOT | Strength, Weakness, Opportunity and Threat |
| ToT | Training of Trainers |
| UN | United Nations |
| UNIOGBIS | United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office in Guinea Bissau |
| WANEP | West African Network for Peacebuilding |

Executive Summary

Over the last four decades, the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) has deployed preventive diplomacy, facilitation, mediation and dialogue in the resolution of conflicts in the West Africa region with a considerable degree of success. In 2015, a dedicated institutional structure, the Mediation and Facilitation Division (MFD) was established within the Directorate of Political Affairs (DPA) with the aim of facilitating, backstopping and coordinating ECOWAS mediation efforts.

An important part of the MFD's activities is the promotion of mediation and dialogue in the West Africa region through training, capacity building, knowledge management and lessons learnt. In these efforts, and following ECOWAS focus on election-related conflicts and crises, the MFD, under the DPA, has prioritised holding of presidential and legislative elections by Member States with the aim of strengthening the capacities of relevant national and local peace actors (civil society, faith-based organisations, women, men and the youth) in the prevention and mitigation of electoral conflicts. Since 2015, the MFD has convened trainings in the West Africa region and beyond, benefitting 468 beneficiaries of which 38.5% were women and 61.5% men.

This "Lessons Learnt and Assessment Study" focuses on five such training workshops that ECOWAS conducted, four of which were in partnership with the Folke Bernadotte Academy (FBA) in the pre-election periods in Mali, Guinea Bissau and Nigeria in 2018. The study was conducted by a team of MFD and FBA staff and consultants to assess the trainings in terms of their relevance, methodology, timing, and outcome, focusing on effectiveness and sustainability. In addition, the study outlines several lessons learnt and recommendations from the perspective of female and male participants, DPA staff and other stakeholders.

From the field data gathered, the majority of respondents considered the ECOWAS-FBA

training highly relevant in terms of content, methodology, participation and timing. The focus of the training on the prevention, mitigation and management of election-related disputes and violence was considered crucial, given the nature of election governance challenges in the countries studied. The selection and vetting of participants and, in particular, the attention paid to gender balance and inclusiveness were considered particular strengths of the programme, critical for enhancing inclusive response mechanisms.

Nevertheless, as the need for dialogue and mediation expertise in the West Africa region increases, the development by ECOWAS of Training of Trainers (ToTs) initiatives directly in its Member States should be considered a priority. The approach would contribute to cascading the training to many more actors and, hence, build a pool of local training expertise, promote ownership and enhance sustainability. Enabling such approach through leveraging existing and future partnerships would engender a more realistic assessment of possibilities and enhanced strategic planning.

Indeed, this study makes clear that, in the context of preventing electoral violence, harnessing national and local peace actors' knowledge and experience in the design and delivery of dialogue and mediation training activities (such as was the case with the ECOWAS-FBA trainings) is key to a context-relevant and, therefore, result-driven approach to capacity building interventions. This should also include representatives of election

management bodies (EMBs), as was the case in Guinea Bissau and Mali. In this regard, the possibility of directly supporting Member States' EMBs with ToTs on dialogue and mediation – including through the assistance of ECOWAS Electoral Assistance Division – would build on the results so far achieved.

Moreover, and in terms of a more holistic approach to future trainings, a key recommendation centres on the development of training interventions covering the entire electoral cycle. This would directly address one of the intended outputs of these trainings, namely, to equip participants with adequate time to network, replicate the training and strategically deploy their dialogue and mediation skills throughout the electoral cycle, and especially the post-electoral phase.

The applicability of dialogue, negotiation and mediation techniques to disputes and conflicts over and above those which are election-related, prompted respondents to request ECOWAS-FBA to consider organising separate workshops on specific conflict issues currently affecting the West African region. These were intra- and inter-communal conflicts; violent extremism; land issues; farmer-herder conflicts; cattle rustling; conflicts related to custom and tradition (FGM, inheritance, gender-based violence), among others.

From a gender perspective, and although gender balance was one of the criteria in the selection of participants, ECOWAS should consider further trainings focusing exclusively on women, including a deeper analysis and reflection on the causes and consequences of the limited access to, and participation of, women in mediation and dialogue interventions at Tracks I, II and III. Infusing the trainings with more case studies and role plays, as well as keynote speakers that project women in leading roles, will enable a more nuanced reflection of the challenges faced by women in the fields of dialogue and mediation.

The positive experience and lessons learnt during the ECOWAS-FBA training, specifically with respect to the Women Mediator Network of Guinea Bissau (REMUMA), should inform the further development of similar trainings. In addition, deepening the involvement of the ECOWAS Gender Directorate as well as the PAPS Women, Peace and Security Committee in the conceptualisation and delivery of the trainings would be a positive strategy.

Respondents to the study shared a similar perspective in relation to the importance of focusing on the youth, particularly the youth wings of political parties, youth associations and other youth groups. Other stakeholder groups that should be considered in respect of capacity building are security sector, political office holders, parliamentarians, religious, traditional authorities and community leaders.

This study has also uncovered several key lessons of relevance to the planning and delivery of future training workshops. First, it highlighted the importance of ECOWAS focus on supporting national institutions during election processes, in line with the ECOWAS Protocol on Democracy and Good Governance.

The need for mechanisms of dispute and conflict resolution – and concurrently of trained practitioners – was high in all countries concerned, raising the need for continuing support with regard to dialogue and mediation training for local peace actors as well as Election Management Bodies. Often “first responders”, these “insider mediators” are already present in the communities and regions where disputes and conflicts occur. For a regional organisation such as ECOWAS to have a unique focus at this level is commendable, even if overcoming the challenges of harmonisation and coordination with Track I efforts persists.

Second, the study found that, in all occasions, the trainings provided participants with much-

needed information on the electoral systems, laws and regulations in their respective countries. In some instances, the trainings also allowed for connections to be established between civil society actors and Election Management Bodies (whether at national or sub-national levels) and other relevant state institutions – connections which will continue to prove critical moving forward.

Third, in terms of deepening and sustaining the impact of activities, the approach adopted in Guinea Bissau should be carefully considered as a template for other countries. In Guinea Bissau, the ECOWAS-FBA intervention began with a multi-stakeholder training involving individuals and organisations from several backgrounds. During this workshop, a specific request was made for a targeted training to the Women Mediator Network of Guinea Bissau (REMUMA), which was delivered three months later. This deeper engagement, in turn, led to yet another tailored training to a group of leading Members of the Bissau Guinean National Parliament, which took place in Accra, Ghana in July 2019.

Fourth, the involvement and buy-in from the ECOWAS Country Offices from the needs assessment/ planning stage of the process proved crucial for implementing such in-country capacity-building programmes. Often the country office provides the necessary linkages, logistic support, and understanding of the local context necessary for these interventions as well as for follow-up mechanisms.

Fifth, the availability of information on participants prior to the training is key as it enables trainers/facilitators to tailor the agenda and, in that way, enhance the effectiveness of the training. In terms of target group, the careful selection and vetting of participants and ensuring a gender balance are all important practices, as is the consideration of the specific needs of the country.

Sixth, regarding the design and delivery of trainings, it is vital to recognise that, in some instances, the training itself may transform into a dialogue of its own. Trainers therefore need to be aware and be prepared to be flexible and adapt the programme to respond to such situations, and the potential for generating political will for a national/ local dialogue should not be underestimated.

Moreover, it is vital to consider proper follow-on activities and possibly projects, including continuing monitoring and evaluation. Such activities could include advanced trainings, support to the creation of networks and platforms for mediation and conflict prevention, documentation of cases and other forms of knowledge management, among others.

In summary, the study provides recommendations for ECOWAS and partners, including the following:

- a. Develop an in-country Training of Trainers programme to cascade the training to more national/local actors. This will help build a pool and network of local training expertise, promote local ownership, enhance sustainability and visibility;
- b. Broaden the scope of the training to the entire electoral cycle, to enable participants to have adequate time to network, replicate the training and to strategically deploy their dialogue and mediation capacity ahead of elections;
- c. Develop specific trainings on Dialogue and Mediation to Member States' Election Management Bodies (EMBs). This should be done in collaboration with the ECOWAS Electoral Assistance Division;
- d. Organise training workshops focusing on specific conflict issues such as intra-

and inter-communal conflicts; violent extremism; land issues; farmer-herder conflicts; cattle rustling; conflicts related to custom and tradition (FGM, inheritance, gender-based violence);'

- e. Prioritise training of women and strengthen the gender dimensions in dialogue and mediation in the training;

- f. Introduce gender-sensitivity training to certain groups (traditional authorities, local government);

- g. Prioritise specialised training for the youth (youth wings of political parties, youth associations, other youth groups) and the security sector, political office holders, parliamentarians, religious, traditional authorities and community leaders.

Foreword

The need to build and strengthen dialogue and mediation capacity within the ECOWAS Commission and the 15 Member States of the Community to promote preventive diplomacy and conflict resolution is a priority that has long been identified and supported by ECOWAS Authority and Management. The issue of capacity development in mediation was particularly prioritised in the 2008 ECOWAS Conflict Prevention Framework (ECPF) with its Preventive Diplomacy component. It emphasised the building of a mediation facilitation capacity within the Commission in order to promote preventive diplomacy interventions in the region through competence and skills enhancement of mediators, facilitators and special envoys; capacity enhancement of relevant institutions of the Community to undertake mediation and arbitration activities within and between Member States; and aid the enhancement of the competence and skills of the appropriate state institutions and civil society institutions within Member States to undertake mediation, conciliation and arbitration activities.

Pursuant to these directives, the ECOWAS Commission, in 2015, effectively established the Mediation Facilitation Division (MFD) within the Directorate of Political Affairs (DPA) with the mandate to, amongst others, facilitate and support capacity-building and knowledge management in dialogue and mediation, and provide operational and logistic supports to appointed ECOWAS mediators, facilitators and special envoys. With respect to capacity-building in dialogue and mediation, it is noteworthy that since its establishment in 2015, the MFD has not only developed a standardised and regionally-contextualised Dialogue and Mediation Curriculum (DMC) and Leader's Guide for enhancing the capacities and knowledge of the diverse range of peacebuilding actors at Tracks I, II and III, concrete evidence as stated in this study report indicates that an average of 4 training workshops were held yearly (2015-2019) with a total of 468 beneficiaries, comprising 38.5% of women and 61.5% men. This is indeed commendable.

This is not without the support and commitment of partners, notably, the Folke Bernadotte Academy, (FBA) – the Swedish Government agency for peace, security and development; the Clingendael Academy, The Hague, Netherlands; the Government of the Kingdom of Denmark's African Programme for Peace, DANIDA, and the

GIZ among others.

The lessons learnt and assessment study of the capacity building training programmes of ECOWAS on dialogue and mediation as tools for the prevention and mitigation of election-related conflicts/disputes, undertaken in partnership, and with financial and technical support of the FBA, are quite relevant and timely. There is no doubt that the findings and recommendations will be considered in future capacity-building designs and interventions by the DPA as well as improve ECOWAS strategic and operational collaboration with national and local peace actors across its Member States in preventing, mitigating and resolving conflicts and disputes, thereby meaningfully contributing to the consolidation of peace and stability in the region.

I, therefore, particularly commend and appreciate the efforts of the DPA staff, as well as the FBA and the consultants for the demonstrated professionalism and expertise in undertaking and producing this exceptional report.



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ECOWAS Commission

Introduction

The MFD's Training and Capacity Building Dimension

Over the last four decades, the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) has prioritised preventive diplomacy, facilitation, mediation and dialogue in the resolution of crisis and conflicts in the West Africa region with a considerable degree of success. These activities are part of ECOWAS' approach to conflict prevention, management and resolution contained in its Protocol Relating to the Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management, Resolution, Peacekeeping and Security adopted by Member States on 10 December 1999 in Lomé, Togo¹. In addition, the Protocol on Democracy and Good Governance adopted on 21 December 2001 in Dakar, Senegal² and the ECOWAS Conflict Prevention Framework, adopted on 16 January 2008 in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso³ contain key provisions relating to preventive diplomacy and mediation.

Although largely ad-hoc, ECOWAS' initial interventions in Liberia (1990), Sierra Leone (1991), Guinea Bissau (1998 and 2004-2010), the Republic of Guinea (2008-2010) demonstrated the importance as well as efficacy of mediation and associated forms of dispute and conflict resolution to quickly diffuse, de-escalate and resolve conflicts by bringing conflict parties away from violence and towards the negotiation table. The more recent mediations in Côte D'Ivoire (2010-2011), Mali (from 2012 onwards), Burkina Faso (2014-2015), The Gambia (2016-2017), Guinea Bissau (2012; 2015 to the present), and Togo (2018) have further proved the need for a more professionalised, structured and predictable approach to preventive diplomacy, mediation and associated forms of interventions by the organisation, and the need for appropriate institutional structures and mechanisms to support such processes. These needs and requirements are highlighted in the 2008 ECOWAS Conflict Prevention Framework (ECPF), which among others, seeks to address specifically the issue of capacity building for mediation and preventive diplomacy at ECOWAS. In particular, the ECPF calls on the Commission to:

- a. advance a mediation facilitation capacity within the ECOWAS Commission to promote preventive diplomacy interventions in the region through competence and skills enhancement of mediators, facilitators and special envoys;
- b. facilitate capacity enhancement of relevant institutions of the community to undertake mediation and arbitration activities within and between Member States; and
- c. facilitate the enhancement of the competence and skills of the appropriate state and civil society institutions within Member States to undertake mediation, conciliation and arbitration activities.⁴

The processes for the institutionalisation of a mediation support structure within the ECOWAS Commission was given a boost during an international conference on "Two Decades of Peace Processes in West Africa: Achievements, failures and lessons", held in Monrovia, Liberia, on 22-26 March 2010. As part of its recommendations, the conference called for the establishment of a mediation support structure within the ECOWAS Commission to facilitate,

backstop and coordinate mediation efforts, and create synergy among regional, national and local mediation processes in the ECOWAS region. Participants, many of whom were sitting as well as former Heads of State in the region and high level and senior officials of the UN, AU and ECOWAS, highlighted, among others, the issue of inadequate capacity (at both the Commission and the ECOWAS Council of the Wise), the lack of political will among leaders to take decisive steps towards tackling the security challenges in Member States and a “weak preventive diplomacy architecture”⁵.

At the end of the conference, participants issued the Monrovia Declaration, which among others, called on ECOWAS to streamline and strengthen its mediation efforts by setting up the Mediation and Facilitation Division in the Political Affairs Directorate, a division which should also facilitate preventive diplomacy initiatives undertaken by the Commission.

With specific reference to capacity enhancement, the Conference stressed on the need for ECOWAS to reinforce the capacity and effectiveness of the ECOWAS Council of the Wise to be able to “engage in the prevention, management and resolution of local and low intensity conflicts by developing a bottom-up mechanism (i.e., alternative dispute resolution methods, including traditional approaches) to reinforce the existing peace and security architecture and engage Member States in the enhancement of their capacities to manage and resolve local and low-intensity conflicts by developing national mechanism”⁶.

Finally, and with relevance to this study, the Monrovia Declaration had called upon ECOWAS to:

- facilitate the strengthening of civil society, particularly women, youth, religious and community groups, and

the media as key stakeholders in peace processes, and actively involve them in the crafting and implementation of peace agreements, as well as in post-conflict peace building;

- Assist in building the capacities of community-based organisations, including women, the youth, religious groups and the media to engage more effectively in preventive diplomacy. It should also encourage the private sector in the respective Member States to invest in building the capacities of these groups and organisations⁷.

To operationalise the salient elements in the Monrovia Declaration, the Commission convened a Needs Assessment Workshop for the Establishment of the ECOWAS Mediation Facilitation Division (MFD), in Lagos, Nigeria from 30 October to 1 November 2012. The main objective was to fine-tune the concept for the establishment of the MFD, in particular, the structure, objectives and activity streams of the Division⁸. The vision for the MFD was thus defined as follows: “a mediation facilitation capacity within the ECOWAS Commission to promote preventive diplomacy in the region through competence and skills enhancement of mediators, information sharing and logistical support”⁹.

Training and capacity building – of in-house staff as well as key actors and female and male stakeholders in the broader West Africa region – were emphasised as key areas of focus. This is quite important against the backdrop that, “from 2006 up until the establishment of the MFD in 2015, the only structured training on negotiation and mediation skills for members of the ECOWAS Council of the Wise, Special Representatives and Mediation Support Staff of ECOWAS was the training organised by the Legon Centre for International Affairs and Diplomacy (LECIAD), Accra, Ghana in 2008”¹⁰.

Following its establishment in 2015 within the Directorate of Political Affairs (DPA), the MFD has been making concerted efforts towards attaining a fully-structured approach to mediation, including harnessing female and male mediation and dialogue expertise in the region, backstopping mediation and preventive diplomacy initiatives undertaken by ECOWAS-appointed mediators, facilitators and special envoys, documenting the organisation's mediation and preventive diplomacy experiences and enhancing the dialogue and mediation capacities of relevant actors and stakeholders across the region¹¹.

The Division has developed the ECOWAS Mediation Guidelines (EMG), an initial step to "provide ECOWAS-appointed Mediators, Special Envoys, and Facilitators, including members of the Council of the Wise and Special Representatives with a comprehensive and informative tool and key principles... to guide their efforts on the peaceful resolution of disputes and conflicts in the region"¹².

Concurrently in 2017, the Division developed a "coherent, standardised and regionally-contextualised training module and guidance for enhancing capacities of the diverse range of mediation practitioners", called the ECOWAS Dialogue and Mediation Curriculum (DMC), with a "Leader's Guide", to be used by trainers. Since 2017, the DMC has been used extensively in all capacity building training workshops organised by DPA in the West Africa region¹³.

Dialogue and Mediation Training and Capacity Building in the West Africa Region

Building capacity for dialogue, mediation and preventive diplomacy has been central to the efforts by the ECOWAS Commission to establish a fully-structured approach to

mediation. Located within the Directorate for Political Affairs (DPA), the MFD's role has been to support its staff, mediators, facilitators and Special and Permanent Representatives through capacity-enhancement activities and the backstopping of mediation efforts.

In December 2015, the MFD partnered with the Legon Centre for International Affairs and Diplomacy (LECIAD) in Ghana to deliver a training course on mediation-support processes for operational and mid-career staff from the ECOWAS Commission's DPA, offices of the special and permanent representatives of the ECOWAS president in member states and staff from member states' ministries of foreign affairs¹⁴.

Since then, the MFD has organised five advanced training courses on negotiation and mediation as an instrument for conflict resolution for senior staff of the ECOWAS Commission, special and permanent representatives of the president of the ECOWAS Commission, members of the Council of the Wise (CoW), staff from some member states' ministries of foreign affairs, and representatives of the West African Network for Peacebuilding (WANEP)¹⁵. Held with the support of the Clingendael Academy at The Hague, Netherlands, these capacity building trainings focused on strengthening the negotiation and mediation skills of the participants, as well as the institutional capacity of the MFD itself.

Annually, from 2015 to 2019, these trainings were attended by several ECOWAS Member States' Ambassadors to Nigeria with simultaneous accreditation to ECOWAS and members of the organisation's Mediation and Security Council, as well as several members of civil society organisations in Member States and the Head of the ECOWAS Liaison Office to the African Union. Moreover, a specialised



Capacity Enchantment workshop for Guinea Bissau Parliament to manage inter-party disputes through the use of negotiation, dialogue and mediation, 2019

training in "Conflict Analysis Skills, Designing and Supporting Dialogue and Mediation Processes for Technical Staff of the Directorate of Political Affairs (DPA) and Offices of the Special and Permanent Representatives" was organised in Accra, Ghana, from 18-22 March 2019.

With regard to Tracks II and III actors, the MFD organised training programmes on "Dialogue and Mediation for CSOs, Faith-Based and Community Peace Actors" in Liberia (July 2017) and Sierra Leone (November 2017). Furthermore, following the development of the Dialogue and Mediation Handbook, the MFD began a process of gradual sharing and cascading down of its unique approach to strengthening mediation and dialogue capacities of actors in the West African region. Various Training of Trainers (ToT) workshops were key to this approach, involving participants from ECOWAS Training Centres of Excellence, Universities, relevant state institutions and ECOWAS staff. These took place in Accra, Ghana in May and November 2017 and July 2018.

Moreover, with a particular focus on mediation and dialogue in situations of electoral conflicts and disputes, the MFD has delivered trainings under the title "Dialogue and Mediation Training for Civil Society Organisations, Faith-Based and Community Peace Actors". These were held in preparation for the 2019 elections in Nigeria, including: North-Central Zone held in Plateau State in September 2018; South-South Zone held in Benin City in October 2018; North-West Zone held in Kaduna in November 2018, South-East Zone held in Enugu also in November 2018 and South-West Zone held in Lagos in December 2018; and Republic of Togo in November 2019.

This report focuses on a select number of these trainings, on which ECOWAS and the FBA – the Swedish Government agency for peace, security and development¹⁶ – collaborated in the design and delivery of four training workshops in the Republic of Guinea Bissau, Republic of Mali and the Federal Republic of Nigeria. In Guinea Bissau, ECOWAS-FBA followed-up its initial multi-stakeholder

training with a four-day workshop specifically designed for the Women Mediator Network of Guinea Bissau (REMUMA).

Lastly, the MFD organised inter-party dialogue and training programmes on negotiation, dialogue and mediation for the leadership and relevant stakeholders of the Sierra Leone and Guinea Bissau Parliament on 26-27 October 2018 and 23-26 July 2019 respectively.

In summary, and over the period under review, the MFD's training and capacity building on negotiation, mediation and dialogue as tools for conflict management and resolution both within and outside the West African region have helped 468 beneficiaries, comprising 38.5% women and 61.5% men.

The figures below show each training disaggregated by sex (Figure 1) and group of beneficiaries (Figure 2). Figure 3 shows gender disaggregation by country of training.



Training on Negotiation and Mediation as instruments for conflict resolution for ECOWAS delegates and Ambassadors at The Clingendael Academy, The Hague

Figure 1:
Number of Participants Disaggregated by Sex (Sample: All MFD Trainings)

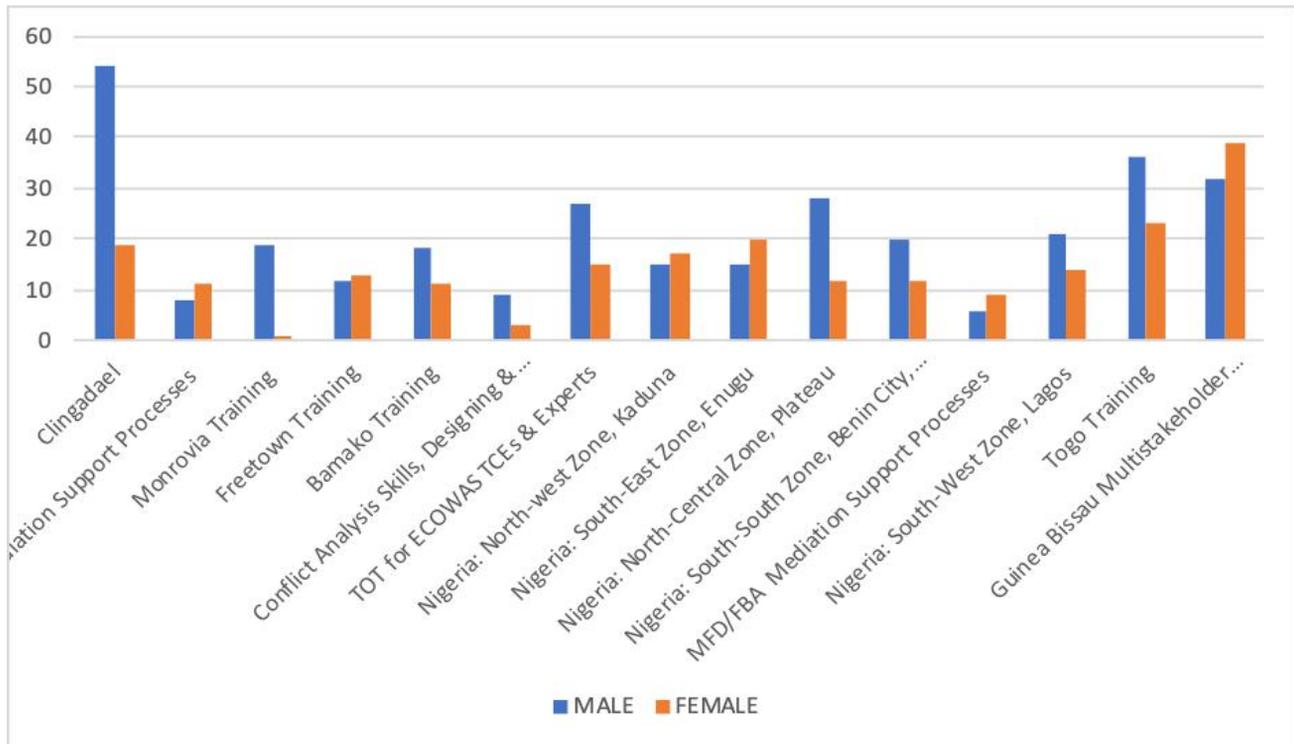


Figure 2:
Number of Participants Disaggregated by Groups (Sample: All MFD Trainings)

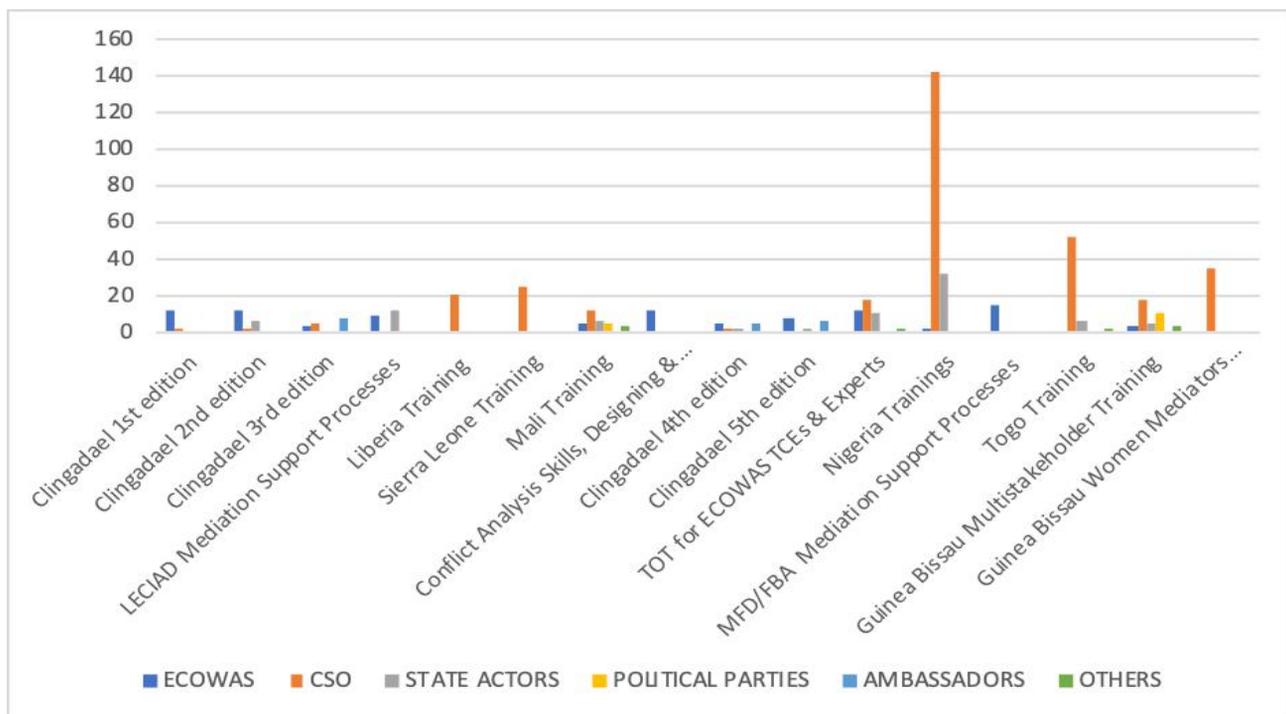
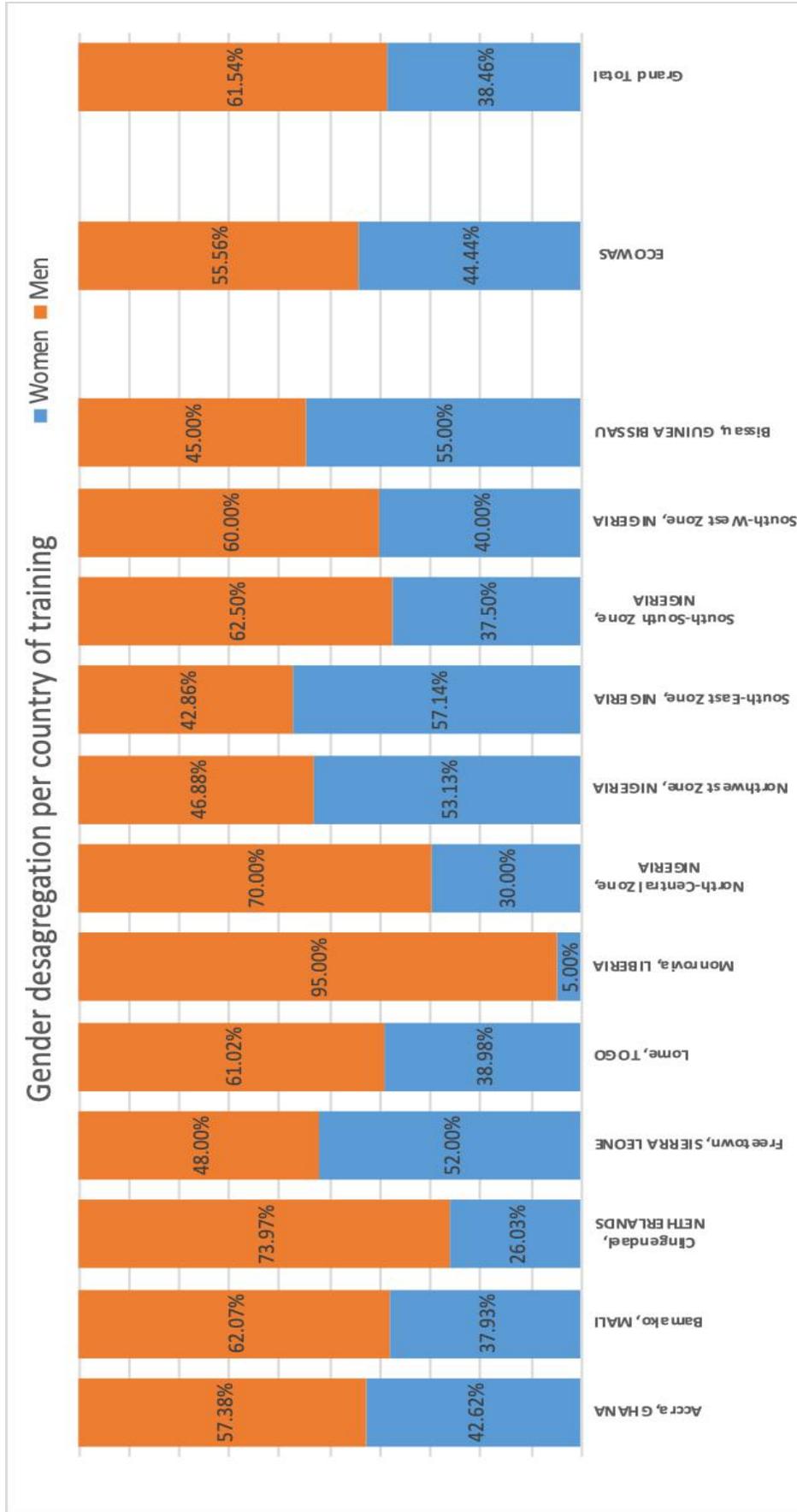


Figure 3:
Gender Disaggregation by Country of Training



The ECOWAS-FBA Cooperation on Dialogue and Mediation Capacity Enhancement

In addition to previous initiatives undertaken by the ECOWAS DPA, in 2018 the Folke Bernadotte Academy (FBA) and the ECOWAS Commission through the DPA-MFD partnered to undertake and implement a capacity building and skills enhancement training programme in selected Member States holding presidential elections. The aim was to contribute to strengthening the capacities of relevant national and local peace actors (civil society, faith-based organisations, women, men and the youth) for the prevention and mitigation of electoral conflicts/disputes through the enhancement of dialogue and mediation skills.

The strategic interest is to ensure that such national and local peace actors use their platforms and networks to create and nurture an enabling environment for the prevention and mitigation of pre-electoral conflicts and engage in the resolution of post-election-related disputes. For both the Commission and FBA, the partnership should result in further enhancement of skills and capacity in dialogue and mediation for both DPA staff and Member States' national and local peace actors to effectively support ECOWAS and its mediation organs in carrying out their preventive diplomacy and mediation efforts.

Specifically, the three broad areas of the capacity enhancement programme are:

- a. *Capacity-building and enhancement of the DPA staff in mediation support processes, a component that envisages tailor-made programmes targeting skills enhancement and trainings in the areas of mediation in electoral-related conflicts;*
- b. *In-country capacity building for National and Local Peace Actors on Dialogue and Mediation around electoral processes;*

- c. *Support efforts aimed at strengthening collaboration and linkages between Tracks I, II and III actors in mediation processes.*

This study focuses on the second area of cooperation – “in-country capacity building for National and Local Peace Actors on Dialogue and Mediation around electoral processes”, piloted in Guinea Bissau, Mali and Nigeria in 2018, and extended to Togo in 2019. ECOWAS-FBA decided to concentrate on engaging key national stakeholders in the three countries, mostly at Tracks II and III levels, but in specific cases, such as Guinea Bissau, also at Track I (Members of Parliament; Political Party Leaders).

In line with ECOWAS' focus on election-related conflicts and crises, the objective of these capacity-building trainings was to enhance the dialogue and mediation competences and skills of participants for preventing and mitigating potential conflicts/disputes around the electoral processes, thereby contributing to the overall peace and stability in the country. Other objectives included:

- Creating an opportunity for the target group (government departments and other state institutions, political parties, civil society, international organisations) to take cognisance of and appreciate



Working Group Session, Training Workshop on the use of dialogue and Mediation in preventing and Mitigating Election - related violence: Republic of Togo, 2019

ECOWAS Constitutional Convergence principles and frameworks for transparent and peaceful elections, and the commitment of ECOWAS to the processes of dialogue and mediation in resolving electoral disputes and conflicts;

- Sustain and enhance ECOWAS strategic and operational engagement with the political process in Member States.

In conducting the trainings, a participatory, adult and inclusive learning approach was used, with presentations, case studies, simulation sessions and experience-sharing. In addition to other training and resource materials, the ECOWAS Dialogue and Mediation Curriculum was used. Moreover, due to the unique context of each country as well as the specific needs and requirements of each training cohort and the duration of each training, the contents of the workshops varied slightly from location to location.

In general terms, the trainings included all (or a selection of) the following modules:

**Table 1:
Training Modules**

| | |
|----|---|
| a. | The role of ECOWAS in the prevention, management and resolution of electoral disputes; |
| b. | Causes and cycles of electoral violence (general and country specific); |
| c. | Mediation: Strategic and operational dimensions; |
| d. | Sharing and reflecting on experiences, best practices and lessons learned in mediation, negotiation and dialogue (Country-specific cases) |
| e. | The legal, normative and decision-making dimensions of ECOWAS mediation; |
| f. | Conflict Analysis and Assessment in the Mediation Environment (general and country specific); |
| g. | Dialogue (process and practice); |
| h. | Proposal development in the area of mediation and dialogue (country specific) |
| i. | Mediation: Process, actors and skills; |
| j. | The ADR Spectrum (Negotiation, Mediation, Arbitration and Dialogue); |
| k. | Gender dimensions in mediation, negotiation and dialogue (country specific); |

It was expected that, at the end of the training in each of the three member states, the participants would have:

- | | |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. enhanced their skills for dialogue and mediation; b. been prepared to play an important role in preventing and mitigating electoral-related violence and disputes in the lead-up, during and after the elections held in their respective countries and communities; | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> c. established networks, contacts and platform(s) for working together for peace and violence-free elections; d. used their networks, platforms and contacts to disseminate peace and non-violence messages; e. used their organisations as a platform for dialogue and mediation of likely election-related tensions/ resolution of electoral disputes. |
|--|--|



Group Picture, Training Workshop on the use of dialogue and Mediation in preventing and Mitigating Election - related violence: Republic of Togo, 2019

THE LESSONS LEARNT AND ASSESSMENT STUDY (LLAS): METHODOLOGY, PROCESS AND OUTPUT

This study is a qualitative assessment of the ECOWAS-FBA trainings conducted in Guinea Bissau, Mali and Nigeria in 2018. Table 2 provides quantitative information on the period of training, the number of participants and the gender breakdown for each training.

**Table 2:
ECOWAS-FBA Training Workshops 2018**

| Country | Period of training workshop | Number of participants | Number of males | Number of females |
|--|-----------------------------|------------------------|-----------------|-------------------|
| Nigeria – Jos Plateau (North-Central geopolitical zone) | September 2018 | 40 | 26 | 14 |
| Mali - Bamako | May 2018 | 29 | 18 | 11 |
| Guinea Bissau – Bissau (Multi-stakeholder workshop) | July 2018 | 37 | 26 | 11 |
| Guinea Bissau – Bissau (Women Mediator Network of Guinea Bissau) | October 2018 | 34 | 6 | 28 |
| Nigeria - Lagos (South-West geopolitical zone) | December 2018 | 35 | 20 | 15 |

Specifically, the LLAS assesses the ECOWAS-FBA in terms of three clusters:



In the first cluster ("Training Workshop Assessment"), the focus was on the assessment of the relevance of the training/capacity building activity in the context of timeliness, content, methodology and delivery.

In the second cluster ("Outcome Assessment"), the focus was assessing the outcomes of the training/capacity building activities for the participants and their organisations in terms of effectiveness and sustainability, specifically in respect of the following:

- a. Participants better equipped with practical skills and techniques for mediation and dialogue;
- b. Participants better equipped to take action to mitigate electoral conflicts and disputes (before, during and after elections);
- c. Participants more cognisant and appreciative of ECOWAS frameworks and principles for transparent and peaceful elections;
- d. The extent to which the training encouraged:

- Networking for action on dialogue and mediation;

- The dissemination of peace and non-violent messages;

- Participants to use their organisations as platforms for dialogue and mediation of election related disputes.

e. Identifying Challenges;

f. Gathering recommendations and lessons learnt from the perspective of both female and male training beneficiaries, DPA staff and other stakeholders and making recommendations on how ECOWAS/DPA can improve its collaboration with national and local peace actors in preventing, mitigating and resolving electoral-related conflicts in Member States.

As noted above, this qualitative assessment study was based on fieldwork and preparatory desk research undertaken jointly by FBA consultants and ECOWAS DPA-MFD staff in four locations:

**Table 3:
Period of Assessment and number and breakdown of participants to FGD, One-to-One and KII by Location**

| Country | Period of Assessment Mission | Focus Group Discussions | One-to-One Interviews | Key Informant Interviews | Total number LLAS participants | Gender balance: Male/female |
|------------------------|------------------------------|-------------------------|-----------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Mali (Bamako) | Week of 19 August 2019 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 18 | 9/3 |
| Nigeria (Lagos) | Week of 2 September 2019 | 8 | 4 | 0 | 12 | 8/4 |
| Guinea Bissau (Bissau) | Week of 9 September 2019 | 26 | 4 | 2 | 32 | 22/10 |
| Nigeria (Abuja) | Week of 16 September 2019 | 8 | 4 | 2 | 14 | 8/6 |

In the light of the specificities of each cluster identified above and the resources available, the following qualitative research methods were used, in addition to preparatory desk research:

1. Focus Group Discussions (FGD: where all three clusters of issues were discussed);
2. One-to-one Interviews (conducted with respondents who had attended the trainings but could not be present at the FGD to assess the more individual and perhaps nuanced dimensions of outcome assessment);
3. Key Informant Interviews (KIIs: key stakeholders that, although not having attended the actual trainings, possess useful insights, recommendations and lessons learned; ECOWAS HQ staff were included in this category).

In each location, the team conducted Focus Group Discussions (FGD) with a sample

of between 7-10 female and male participants (which had attended the 2018 training workshops), excluding Bissau where 24 participants were part of the FGD. In addition, the team followed up this with one-to-one phone and face-to-face interviews with training participants who were unable to attend the FGD meeting, as well as Key Informant Interviews (KIIs) with key stakeholders who, although not having attended the actual trainings, were deemed important to the objectives of the workshops because of their insights into the outcomes and impact.

The LLAS integrates gender aspects with reference to the issues discussed as elaborated below, as well as in other aspects of the process, including in the composition of the FGDs and the KIIs.

In terms of process, a draft report was presented at a review/validation workshop with ECOWAS staff, FBA representatives and other key stakeholders and held in Abuja, Nigeria on 13 November 2019.

FINDINGS

The Bamako Training Workshop

Introduction

In the period leading to Mali's last presidential elections (which took place on 29 July 2018), there was the need to ensure, to the extent possible, a peaceful and violence-free election by both international organisations, including ECOWAS and national institutions. Of particular importance to ECOWAS, was the need to support national institutions in the conduct of violence-free elections, in line with the ECOWAS Protocol on Democracy and Good Governance.

The workshop took place from 2-4 May 2018, three months before the elections¹⁷, with the expected outcomes being that: (a) participants would be able to play an important role in peace building and the maintenance of peace leading to the elections; (b) following the workshop participants would build and sustain networks and contacts in working together for peaceful and violence-free elections; and (c) participants would work through their organisations and platforms in reaching out/disseminating messages on the use of dialogue and mediation as tools for conflict resolution and management.

The training workshop was attended by 29 participants¹⁸, ranging from Members of Parliament, representatives of state institutions, diplomats and representatives of the UN Mission (MISAHÉL/AU), civil society organisations and religious and traditional authorities, academics and researchers, representatives of women's groups, among others. The Election Management Body was also represented. Of the 29 participants, 18 were men and 11 were women.

Assessing Relevance: Timeliness, content, methodology and delivery

The LLAS team arrived in Bamako on 19 August 2019 and began its work on 20 August with a series of one-to-one interviews with participants who had attended the training workshop in 2018 (six in total). The Focus Group Discussion meeting was held on 21 August and included representatives from state institutions

(Ministry for Territorial Administration), civil society and research organisations, and a religious leader. Key Informant Interviews were held with key institutions – MINUSMA, Ministry of Territorial Administration, Electoral Commission, Women's Ministry, WANEP and the African Union (AU) took place on 22 and 23 August. Of the 5 FGD participants, 2 were women and 3 were men; The Key Informant Interviewees were 1 woman and 6 men.

On the basis of the first cluster of issues, the training conducted by ECOWAS and FBA in Mali was described as very relevant on two fronts. First, it was relevant in terms of content and delivery and also highly relevant in terms of the needs of participants, their organisations as well as the peace and security needs of the country. As highlighted by a respondent, "the training was interesting and very relevant because we needed such rendez-vous in order to enhance our knowledge and skills in dialogue and mediation that was necessary for a peaceful election."¹⁹

The training was said to have come at the most opportune time to give confidence to participants who described the pre-election period as tense. As noted during the FGD session,

"the workshop was relevant and responsive to what is needed because our country was in a very "hot" context and there was a lot of fear about the pre- and post-electoral violence"²⁰.



Participants at the Training Workshop in Bamako, Mali

In addition, a participant noted that

“at certain points, it was observed that due to the preparation for violent clashes by groups, the demand for machetes in the market soured. In such context, it was very important to be able to raise awareness, facilitate dialogue and mediation to calm people down”¹⁶²¹.

Despite the good reviews of the training by participants, some challenges were also identified and it was felt that, if addressed in subsequent exercises, would help improve impact. Among some of the challenges that relate directly to the format and delivery of the training, participants noted:

- The period between the training and the holding of elections was too short and therefore beneficiaries did not have sufficient time to properly organise themselves and apply what they had learned vis-à-vis different target groups;
- There was no planned after-training follow-up support by ECOWAS;

With regard to the external environment, widespread ignorance of the electoral laws posed a great challenge, affecting the effectiveness with which participants were able to initiate dialogue and mediation interventions. Subsequent trainings should therefore factor this aspect into the content to enable trainees identify entry points and devise appropriate strategies for engagement.

Assessing Outcome: Effectiveness and sustainability

The extent to which participants consider themselves better equipped and used the knowledge and skills acquired to mitigate election-related conflicts was at the heart of the rationale for the ECOWAS-FBA training. This is the second cluster of issues under assessment, providing some indications of outcome and sustainability of these types of interventions.

Malian participants, both female and male, generally agreed that the training had enhanced their capacities in dialogue and mediation and had also encouraged them to increase their own awareness of opportunities to apply them. The need was expressed for a more

concerted outreach for these opportunities before, during and after the elections as the interventions reduced the tension both at the community and national levels. Furthermore, as noted by an FGD participant, "it has better equipped us to enhance awareness campaigns, workshops and training sessions for political parties and this helped to minimize the post-election violence"²².

It was also evident that, beyond using the knowledge and skills acquired for election-related dispute resolution, some of the beneficiaries reported using the skills to enhance their work in general. A participant declared: "the experience gained during the training has helped a lot. I am a Judge and currently practicing as a lawyer for the State. So far, I have organized mediation sessions that have been successful with the parties involved resolving the issues amicably. Some of the disputes settled had the potential of escalating into national violence"²³.

Of note, FGD participants in Mali continue to use the training materials as resource and reference materials in their current practice.

In respect of ensuring sustainability, the training process encouraged participants to use existing structures that can support dialogue and mediation while encouraging the creation of new networks and platforms for mediation and conflict prevention with a role in addressing electoral violence where there were no local or national structures. Even though workshop participants had constituted an informal network as a follow-up to the training, and planned to meet regularly, they became too busy during the election period and were unable to attend the planned meetings that were supposed to serve as a hub of dialogue and mediation efforts in Mali. According to a participant, "We tried to form a mediation network for the peaceful election. This network has an office, president and action plan but did not operate for long because each member put his or her organization's demands ahead of that of the network"²⁴.

Some of the participants, however, connected with Local Council leaders in some constituencies and also linked with their parties to share the tenets of peaceful resolution of election-related disputes.

Other interventions included the use of Tamani TV and Radio programme Le Grand Dialogue to support the efforts of women in their quest to ensure peace during the elections.

In this context, a suggestion made during the FGD was that the selection of participants at the local level could have included women who are very good in community dialogue and mediation but are almost always in the background.

Peace messages by religious leaders who participated in the training, using highly-credible dialogue platforms such as the High Islamic Council, were considered to have supported the conduct of peaceful elections. Another avenue of sustainability identified and used is the family unit and networks. Participants developed and shared WhatsApp and SMS via mobile handsets to families and groups especially at the community level.

In this setting, the Malian Center for Inter-Party Dialogue (CMDI) which is working on peacebuilding through dialogue and engaged in voter-awareness sessions on post-election violence, workshops and training sessions with political parties as well as the dialogue sessions organised for political associations and groups, contributed to minimisation of violence during the elections in Mali. The CMDI is considered a vehicle of sustainability.

The training also strengthened networking between and among the beneficiary organisations including between the Platform of Women Parliamentarians and civil society. For example, representatives from CSOs met with the leadership of the Platform before the elections to advocate for peaceful elections and acceptance of the election results.

The training also enhanced the working relationship between civil society organisations and State institutions which had benefitted from the training. The training in many cases did not only allow participants to get exposed to the tools and protocols of ECOWAS but was also an opening of close collaboration and networking with the ECOWAS Commission DPA.

Bamako Summary Recommendations

- a. Organise such future trainings at least 3 to 6 months before elections to give participants sufficient time to network and replicate the training for their peers and networks and to strategically position their dialogue and mediation capacity ahead of elections and its ramifications;
 - b. Organise separate training sessions for different actors (civil society, state representatives) because in the context of Mali, mixing state and non-state actors together compromises the needed frank, open and honest analysis during discussions in the training;
- c. In the design of the training content, consider the context of culture, religion and the legal system which can affect dialogue and mediation designs;
- d. The process of identifying and selecting participants for training should consider participants' capability to operationalise what has been learnt. Intentionally plan to include decision-makers;
- e. Include follow-up support and monitoring as part of the training package to ensure expected training outcomes are achieved.

The Lagos/South-West Geopolitical Zone Training Workshop



Participants at the focus group discussion, Lagos, Nigeria

Introduction: The ECOWAS-FBA – in partnership with the Institute for Peace and Conflict Resolution (IPCR) – held the “Dialogue and Mediation Training for Civil Society Organisations, Faith-Based and Community Peace Actors” in Lagos, Lagos State, from 4 to 6 December 2018. A total of 35 participants (including 3 from the IPCR) from across Nigeria’s South-West geopolitical zone participated in the training. Participants included the civil society, faith-based organisations, religious and traditional authorities, professional associations (such as the Institute for Chartered Mediators and Conciliators), academic and research organisations and women’s organisations. Of the 35 participants, 15 were women (43%) with 20 being men (57%)²⁵.

Compared to the other trainings, the Lagos capacity-building workshop presented several important differences. The first relates to the difficulty in involving representatives of political parties, as this would have meant, for the sake of impartiality, extending invitations to all political parties in Nigeria’s South-West geopolitical zone. This potential number of participants would have made it impossible to adequately run the capacity building and training workshop. The ECOWAS MFD decided therefore to focus on Track III actors, a decision which fell within the overall objectives of the programme.

With general elections scheduled for 23 February 2019 in a country that had experienced election-related violence in the near past, and building on the experiences gained in the Bamako and Bissau training workshops, the programme was steered slightly in the direction of electoral violence situation analysis and assessment. Following from a reflection on understanding of electoral violence, its causes and dynamics (common to other trainings), several sessions were devoted to expert inputs on electoral violence in Nigeria and the South-West, understanding the Election Management Body and relevant legislation (and how

alternative dispute resolution, including mediation and dialogue, fits into this institutional architecture) and conflict analysis tools.

Adapted to reflect the specific situation in Nigeria, the programme nevertheless was firmly grounded on the objective of enhancing participants' competencies on dialogue and mediation of election-related disputes. In addition, and considering that many of the participants were experienced mediators (community, labour, family mediation), the programme emphasised the strengthening of skills required for the design and conduct of mediation and dialogue interventions, including operational and strategic planning. Furthermore, following the experience in Guinea Bissau (discussed below), one of the learning objectives of this training was that participants "develop a proposal in the area of mediation and dialogue for the South-West Geopolitical Zone of Nigeria in light of the upcoming elections"²⁶.

Assessing Relevance: Timeliness, content, methodology and delivery

The LLAS team arrived in Lagos, Nigeria, on 1 September 2019 and began fine-tuning the preparations for the FGD. Following the experience in Bamako, the team reviewed the FGD and KIIs question guides to include a series of more focused questions on the outcome assessment dimension. This was also an opportunity for the FBA consultant to interview his ECOWAS colleague – as the MFD staff responsible for training and capacity building. A number of recommendations ensued from this meeting and have been included in the recommendations below²⁷.

The LLAS FGD in Lagos took place on 3 September 2019. Eight participants attended the FGD, and as noted above, ranged from representatives of academia and research institutions (Institute for Chartered Mediators and Conciliators, ICMC; National Early Warning

and Response Center; Society for Peace Studies and Practice, SPSP), to civil society practitioners (African Foundation for Environment and Development, AFED; Peace Heritage Foundation), to representatives of faith-based organisations (Women of Faith) and traditional authorities (Council of Ulama of Nigeria). Participants were equally divided between women (4) and men (4).

The one-to-one interviews included respondents from religious organisations (Christian Association of Nigeria); traditional authorities (a High Chief); and civil society (National Early Warning and Response Centre). In this case, due to the unavailability of several of the female participants on the day scheduled for interviews, all interviewees were male.

Female and male participants and interviewees in the Lagos phase of the LLAS were highly appreciative of the ECOWAS-FBA training, with one traditional Authority (a High Chief) suggesting that the programme should be extended to cover more areas and institutions²⁸. "An eye opener" was the expression used by another FGD participant²⁹. Notably, this positive view of the training had already been expressed by the respondents to the post-workshop evaluation questionnaire, with a majority rating the "overall assessment of the training experience" as excellent and directly relevant to them³⁰.

Opinions on the question of the timing of the training diverged in the Lagos FGD. For some, the training was conducted at the right time, recalling that having been delivered in the first week of December 2018, it gave them adequate time to network as the elections were held on 23 February 2019. For a male participant, this type of training was much needed in the Nigerian context because conflicts take place constantly, whether as pre-election violence, disturbances or other forms of disputes³¹. A male interviewee noted that the "training was vital, and in my case it really helped me in my work"³².

Nonetheless, two male participants suggested that the training should be held earlier in the election cycle because the elections preparation spanned at least two years; "by the time we returned to our organisations we tried to contact politicians but they were too busy...we only had the attention of the sitting Governor after the election!"³³ Another participant noted that it was "too late" as "we should be prepared earlier...we need to look at the electoral cycle"³⁴.

Further to the issues in our first cluster (content, methodology and delivery), the training was described as relevant and innovative in terms of content – with seasoned mediators present in the FGD noting that the exercise on SWOT analysis of different alternative dispute resolution methods (mediation, negotiation, dialogue, facilitation and arbitration) was very useful when applied to election-related disputes. Distinguishing between the advantages and disadvantages of different methods as they relate to different types of disputes and conflicts was highly appreciated.

A respondent to the post-workshop evaluation questionnaire stated that "two of the key insights gained from the training were the ability to identify and understand adjudication and arbitration in a better form and the conflict resolution spectrum; the cycle of peacemaking"³⁵.

Both male and female participants considered that the training allowed them to express their views and get involved in the training activities irrespective of their gender. A particular high point in the training was the best-practices and lessons-learned roundtable presented by participants themselves, with the focus on the sharing experiences with the wider group. This practice was commended by all participants in the FGD.

Participants at the FGD also discussed the issue of participant selection, as a way to maximise the impact of this kind of capacity-building

exercise. Considering the criteria for selection of participants, some suggested that the programme should "prioritise those CSOs, NGOs and individuals who will play a role in election monitoring and observation"³⁶.

Moreover, the duration of the training was also considered a challenge by many FGD participants with most asking for additional training days. It is noteworthy that this had already been expressed in the responses to the post-workshop evaluation questionnaire³⁷.

A final issue discussed related to the language used in the training as well as the translation of training materials. Several FGD participants and an interviewee raised the need to present the training in local languages and/or Nigerian Pidgin, particularly if the programme is targeted at intervening in local, rural areas³⁸.

Assessing Outcome: Effectiveness and Sustainability

The second cluster of the LLAS related to assessing effectiveness and sustainability, partly in relation to the extent to which participants were better prepared with skills and techniques for mediation and dialogue of election-related disputes – and, as important, whether participants had indeed had the opportunity to take practical action using those skills and techniques. Lagos participants were in agreement that the training had been effective and very useful in their various roles during the election period.

Several of the participants at the Lagos FGD acted in both official and unofficial capacities during the elections and noted how some of the skills discussed during the training had been useful, particularly those around dialogue and mediation skills (listening), and the design of mediation processes. A male participant noted that

"when I joined the training I did not know I would become a Ward Returning Officer for INEC in Oyo State. By the time we got to the place we had to deal with violent disputes and I suddenly found myself becoming the mediator in my team, particularly dealing with the Military and Police and trying to mediate between INEC and the local politicians"³⁹.

Another interviewee served as an observer in Oyo State and used his skills to diffuse a conflict that occurred around the unavailability of election materials: "I spoke to the people involved, calmed them down, and mediated their dispute"⁴⁰.

The examples above, according to a male FGD participant, pose an interesting challenge concerning the relation between the mediation of electoral disputes and election observation. The participant noted that, as an election observer in Osun State, he was expected not to interfere. Yet, even though this was not his core mandate as an observer, he was able to mediate a dispute around a technical issue of one of the card readers. In another case, an FGD participant said, "As an election observer, we are not allowed to intervene but simply observe... however, I found a way to mediate a few conflicts!"⁴¹

A female participant at the FGD shared how she felt empowered after the training and used the skills during the election campaign and particularly on election-day, by engaging the youth in her area in dialogue on mitigating election violence.⁴²

A good example shared by one of the male participants, who is a religious leader, relates to his use of some of the knowledge gained in the context of a dispute between two political parties (the PDP and the ADP) in his locality. He facilitated a mediated session between the two parties and resolved the issue under dispute. During a one-to-one interview, this participant noted that

"the training absolutely improved my personal and professional skills, how to manage emotions, my attitudes to change"⁴³.

The LLAS team interviewed a High Chief who had participated in the Lagos workshop but could not attend the FGD. He described how he had debriefed his King, and was requested to "disseminate/step-down the training to the community through the community council meeting", adding "we invited the youth to disseminate the information on dialogue and mediation".⁴⁴ Another participant mentioned how the training helped him in the immediate post-election period: "we have been working with leaders to try to change the win-lose narrative, trying to build trust; we are a capacity development provider and interact often with state officials on issues of violence, election rigging, etc."⁴⁵

For a female participant, these skills are applicable beyond elections. Reflecting on her experience, the FGD participant shared how she deployed the skill and knowledge to organise a dialogue programme, "Say no to Rape, Say no to Violence", in her community.⁴⁶

How to domesticate the skill set acquired, sustainability and ownership were issues raised by an FGD participant.⁴⁷ The issue of "cascading down" the knowledge acquired and work-plan(s) developed during the training was a topic much discussed at the Lagos FGD. "Step down training" was an expression used several times, meaning that participants considered it crucial to bring these skills, knowledge and experience down to the local, village level. A suggestion was to link up with Community Development Committees established within each of the Community Development Authorities. A participant provided a model of how that could be achieved by sharing the experience of a project called "Citizen Engagement Platforms" in Ogun State.⁴⁸ There was also the case with a female

participant who worked with Community Development Committees, and was thus able to train the Chairmen in techniques of dialogue and mediation.⁴⁹

A recommendation on sustainability was the idea of “replication”/“positive multiplier effect”; that is, designing these trainings as Training of Trainers (ToT) opportunities with “organisations we can partner with which will then conduct the training in their local areas”⁵⁰. This issue was emphasised several times by participants, who suggested that ToT would empower trainers to identify opportunities in their local/professional areas to conduct training and could also be used in awareness-raising and campaigns of sensitisation.

As noted above, one of the concerns of this study was to obtain as much information as possible on other possible thematic areas of further engagement for the programme in the future. Organising similar trainings for political office holders, traditional leaders (affirmed by all participants as a very important stakeholder), the youth/youth groups (including violent youth groups such as the Area Boys), women, and people with disabilities were suggested by the Lagos FGD participants. Engaging religious authorities/bodies in these trainings was seen as a priority for one of the interviewees as they, by the nature of their work, are already involved in dispute resolution in urban and rural areas⁵¹.

Moreover, at the Lagos FGD, an interesting proposition was that of engaging with the Nigerian security sector, with participants concurring that this kind of training would be beneficial to the Police, the Military, as well as the Civil Defence and other security agencies.

On other thematic issues, respondents suggested focusing on intra- and inter-community conflicts, violent extremism, land issues, farmer-herder conflicts, cattle rustling, and conflicts related to custom and tradition

(FGM, inheritance, gender based-violence, etc.). Land conflicts were especially high on demand⁵².

On the extent to which the training encouraged networking for action, participants referred to the very active WhatsApp Group (“ECOWAS-FBA Mediators”), which enabled the participants to sustain close contact, sharing relevant information during the election period, and beyond as it is still active.

Lagos/South-West Geopolitical Zone Summary Recommendations

- a. Increase the duration of the training for a minimum of 5-7 substantive days (to have more opportunities to role-play and work on simulations; give more time for participants to share their own experience in a structured manner)⁵³;
- b. Consider developing / implementing a Training of Trainers (ToT) approach to capacity building, focusing on organisations which will then conduct the training in their local areas;
- c. Develop further trainings focused on specific groups of actors, such as the security sector, political office holders, religious and traditional authorities, community leaders, women organisations, women leaders, youth groups;
- d. Introduce women-focused and gender-sensitive and gender-specific training to certain groups (traditional authorities, local government);
- e. Organise separate training workshops focusing specific conflict issues, some of which require a deep understanding of culture and custom in a particular

- area; these comprise intra-communal conflicts, violent extremism, land issues, farmer-herder conflicts, cattle rustling, conflicts related to custom and tradition (FGM, inheritance, gender based-violence, etc.);
- f. Invest in follow-on activities (networking, research) on social media as a means to disseminate, share and strengthen the linkages between those that attended the trainings and ECOWAS itself;
 - g. Increase the "visibility of the programme" by raising awareness and dissemination;⁵⁴
 - h. ECOWAS should engage more with institutions such as Universities and research organisations, as well as relevant CSOs so that knowledge on ECOWAS itself (background and history, legal and normative, structure and areas of operation) become more widely known⁵⁵.



Participants at the Training Workshop in Lagos, Nigeria

The Bissau Training Workshops

Introduction: From the Multi-Stakeholders' Workshop to the Training of the Women Mediator Network of Guinea Bissau

The ECOWAS-FBA training workshop, titled "Dialogue, Mediation and the Electoral Process in Guinea Bissau", took place from 10 to 12 July 2018 in Bissau, capital city of Guinea Bissau. It was the first workshop of this kind that had taken place in the country, which, since 2015, had been embroiled in deep institutional crisis, characterised by politico-constitutional disputes between different state actors. The dismissal by the President of five Prime Ministers since August 2015, coupled with conflict and controversy surrounding the appointment of successive Cabinets, had contributed to a situation of paralysis across all branches of Government. For Bissau-Guineans, as well as for the international community, the country had returned to a situation of profound instability, the spectre of a recent past marked by civil war, coups d'état, political assassinations and military intervention – both internal and external – casting a shadow on the prospects for the consolidation of democracy, the rule of law and the much needed socio-economic development of the country⁵⁶.

ECOWAS has been deeply involved in trying to diffuse the crisis and helping Bissau-Guineans manage and resolve their political conflict (in this latest phase since 2015), particularly having recently succeeded in mediating the Conakry Accord of 14 October 2016. Against the backdrop of a tense political environment in which the scheduled 18 November 2018 legislative election was to be held, ECOWAS-FBA considered the period ripe for a capacity-building workshop in the country, aiming specifically at:

- Contributing to efforts at fostering national peace and reconciliation initiatives in Guinea Bissau in the context of the upcoming elections and the key political processes;
- Strengthening and developing participants' understanding and skills required for the design and conduct of mediation and dialogue interventions as a means of preventing escalation of tensions into violent conflicts⁵⁷.

A total of 37 participants (30% women and 70% men) attended the training workshop, representing a broad spectrum of the society and including representatives from all political parties, the national electoral commission, elders and traditional leaders, religious and inter-faith leaders, media, civil society organisations (focusing specifically on youth and women's groups), and representatives of the international community (UNIOGBIS).

The methodology employed and contents of the workshop were in some ways similar to the ones conducted in Mali and Nigeria⁵⁸. Yet, in Bissau, a very tense political environment initially characterised interpersonal relations between some of the political party representatives at the training, requiring the team to reformulate some of the training sessions in order to promote dialogue in practice⁵⁹. This was done through mixed group work, for example, focusing on the assessment of key issues and themes ahead of the elections; group reflections on lessons learned and current potential for dialogue in the country and, finally, asking participants to develop "An Action Plan on Dialogue and Mediation for Guinea Bissau". Moreover, a novel addition to the programme was the analysis of

the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT) of different conflict resolution methods (negotiation, mediation, arbitration, dialogue and facilitation) in cases of electoral-related disputes.

According to the evaluation summary report at the end of the workshop,

“the venue provided a space for many ‘first meetings’ and this was highly appreciated among the participants...some expressed that the intervention had opened doors not only for the deepening of knowledge about elections and mediation tools but also for a dialogue between different and often opposing groups which can continue beyond the intervention”⁶⁰.

This was specifically highlighted as a way of creating bridges across political parties, generations, regions and gender. We will return to these issues below when we discuss the findings of the LLAS.

Of relevance to the gender dimension of the ECOWAS-FBA collaboration, was the request made during the workshop for a follow-up capacity-building training, specifically

designed for the Women Mediator Network of Guinea Bissau (REMUMA). With the support of the Office of the ECOWAS Special Representative in Guinea Bissau, ECOWAS-FBA organised a follow-on training specifically for REMUMA from 8 to 11 October 2018 for a longer four-day duration. A total of 28 women mediators associated with REMUMA (including family and community mediators, but also legal and political mediators) from all regions of Guinea Bissau attended the training; 6 men also attended.

In terms of methodology, and due to the specificities and needs of this group, the ECOWAS-FBA team added several gender modules to the programme’s agenda used in earlier workshops⁶¹. Participants were asked to: “share and reflect on experiences, best practices and lessons learned with regard to the role of women in mediation, negotiation and dialogue in Guinea Bissau”; “engender a culture of reflective practice in mediation and dialogue in Guinea Bissau” and “develop a proposal in the area of mediation and dialogue for women of Guinea Bissau, in light of the upcoming elections”. By the end of the four-day training, women participants had developed an action



Participants of the FGD and KIs held in Guinea Bissau

plan for Guinea Bissau, containing a series of recommendations, including ensuring women mediators are involved in mediating high level political and electoral disputes and conflicts; women's access to justice and prioritising women involvement in community mediation.

Assessing Relevance: Timeliness, content, methodology and delivery

The FGD in Bissau took place on 12 September 2019 with a total of 26 participants, corresponding to a sizeable representation of the July 2018 training. If, on the one hand, this made the FGD slightly more difficult to manage within the framework of time allocated to each cluster of issues to be discussed, on the other hand, it avoided the need for additional one-to-one interviews with participants that for one reason or another could not attend the meeting. It also made for a very participative and interesting discussion.

Participants at the Bissau FGD felt, overwhelmingly, that both trainings had been useful, well-organised and positive. Referring to the July training,

*a male participant noted how "we cannot overestimate how important these techniques of dialogue and mediation are in our context here: they are fundamental conflict resolution mechanisms with immediate applicability in our country"*⁶².

Indeed, for the majority of participants, both male and female, the training came at the right time, they recalled how initially the elections had been scheduled for November 2018 which meant that they would have approximately five months before elections took place. Nevertheless, a couple of participants noted how, because of the repeated postponement of the elections (which eventually took place in March 2019), we should consider "a more robust follow-up approach...at least follow-it up right to the elections"⁶³.

Staff of the Office of the ECOWAS Special Representative to Guinea Bissau – one male and one female – who attended the training felt that the "timing was excellent". Indeed, the fact that the workshop brought together a wide variety of stakeholders in a training environment was a very beneficial experience – allowing them to get to know one another in a different environment, to share their work, analysis and concerns in a non-threatening environment⁶⁴.

As in all other cases surveyed, participants considered that the three days allocated for the first training was inadequate, suggesting a minimum of five substantive days. A longer time frame would enable for the introduction of more case-studies, simulations – and tailoring these case-studies and simulations to the specific reality of Guinea Bissau. This was one of the reasons the second training, focusing on the Women Mediator Network of Guinea Bissau was organised over four days.

Participants were in agreement as to how useful the training had been, both in respect of the (then) upcoming elections as well as their own work.

*"A female participant noted "the training really helped, particularly with regards to analysis, to learning how to identify where the fundamental problem lies"; another considered that it was about "finding bridges to reduce conflict"*⁶⁵.

Two issues were presented in terms of approach and methodology. Participants shared their appreciation for the holding of the training in Portuguese (including reading materials) as most of them do not have working knowledge of English or French. In addition, that the facilitators understood Creole was an added advantage - some of the participants felt more at ease using Creole during the training, at times, very heated discussions. If more documents on dialogue, mediation and

electoral violence were made available in Portuguese, there is a likelihood that Bissau Guinean stakeholders might be more connected to ECOWAS and benefit from its experiences, best practices and lessons learned in mediation and dialogue as well as share their own experiences.

Moreover, as a participant noted, there is a “knowledge gap” between participants, and this should be reflected in the selection of participants for future trainings. “Some participants have university degrees while others only primary schooling. Some have practical experience while others have no experience at all”. This was particularly the case with the training workshop with the Women Mediator Network of Guinea Bissau (REMUMA) held in October 2018⁶⁶.

Assessing Outcome: Effectiveness and sustainability

The participants of the Bissau FGD (almost all of the participants of the July 2018 workshop), shared many examples of how they had applied their skills acquired at the workshop.

An example related to the application of mediation skills by a female participant who, during the campaign period, worked as a monitor for the Media and Communication Counsel of the National Assembly. One of the functions of this body was to monitor media (including television, radio, print media and social media) for responsible practice, impartiality and fake news. The participant explained how she intervened using mediation skills in an issue involving a particular radio station which was spreading fake news and rumours. Over several meetings, the result was satisfactory and the Radio stopped broadcasting the programme in question⁶⁷.

Another example was shared by the male participant from the National Electoral Commission (CNE) who explained how, following the identification by his team of the major sources of tension/issues, they realised that, although they could not intervene directly, they could establish partnerships with CSOs and traditional and religious authorities to do so. This was particularly important pertaining the campaign, on the election-day itself, as well as the post-election period. To this end, the CNE organised a series of meetings with these civil society stakeholders to conduct a joint analysis of their challenges and their potential role in dialogue and mediation. CSOs, traditional and religious authorities assisted on election-day in dispute resolution as well as in the vote counting.⁶⁸

Participants pointed to a challenge in the application of knowledge gained; that is, the issue of access to official institutions. Many participants noted how difficult it is to relate to official State institutions involved in the election process in Guinea Bissau. This is particularly the case because the legal and institutional election infrastructure (including the CNE and its substructures) defines mechanisms for dispute resolution – yet, very rarely used, if at all. How then can CSOs, academia, mediation practitioners, traditional and religious institutions, be involved in supporting the CNE with dispute resolution? Participants suggested that this area should be included in future capacity-building training programmes.

From a gender perspective, the focus group discussion raised the issue of opportunities and challenges with women's roles in mediating political and election-related conflicts. The reasons why women in Guinea-Bissau may not be as involved in mediating such conflicts as men has more to do with the low level of education among women, rather than gender discrimination, it was argued. In support of this, a female participant pointed to the informal Group of Women Facilitators of

Guinea Bissau which engaged directly with the President and all political leaders in the period leading to the elections. This eventually resulted in the creation of the Women's Council, a state advisory body.

Another male participant explained how the negotiation and dialogue skills learned during the training were useful in the mediation of a dispute which pitted the children of former combatants against the Secretary of State of Former Combatants in demand of their rights under the law but were not receiving, "With the knowledge I gained from the training, I was able to mediate the dispute successfully...this was a situation that if left unresolved would have had violent consequences".⁶⁹

An important contribution was that of UNIOGBIS. The representative of the Mission explained how, in the development and application of the Code of Conduct for the elections (together with civil society), mediation and dialogue played a key role. The skills learned by these organisations during the capacity-building training were important in their efforts at diffusing situations where the behaviour of political parties and actors were against the code of conduct. This participant considers this an area which needs further enhancement and support.

Other cases of practice, unrelated to the election period, included cases of land tenure, inheritance and divorce. A female participant explained the importance of having mediators assist individuals, families and communal group in rural areas in relating to the State institutions with respect to resolving land conflicts and inheritance disputes, among others. This was one of the key recommendations made by the Women Mediator Network of Guinea Bissau (REMUMA). During the October 2018 workshop, the women mediators had explained how a substantial part of their work focuses on access to justice. A participant noted: "Often traditional and customary laws and traditions are in direct conflict with modern law", calling for the strengthening of their mediation and dialogue

capacities to discharge their mandate appropriately.⁷⁰

A REMUMA participant considered it important that beyond election-related disputes and violence, the training should focus on current key issues such as land, farmer-herder conflicts, border area conflicts, and post-conflict reconciliation. Furthermore, a male lawyer noted how, in two recent land cases where he would normally advise clients to go to court, he decided to employ mediation which resulted in the resolution of the cases through assisted negotiation without recourse to the courts. He declared, "these mechanisms are unquestionably faster and more efficient than our courts".⁷¹

Another participant explained how he had used mediation techniques in the dispute between the Ministry of Education, the Unions and the youths who had barricaded themselves in front of the Ministry. Using dialogue techniques, he was involved in a process that created a negotiation forum, with all parties represented, and which began to address the issues in dispute.⁷²

One of the female participants who, at the time of the training was a political party representative and is now a Minister in the government formed in 2019, noted that ongoing analysis is a critical part of the negotiation/mediation/dialogue process. In her words, "We intervened, several times, using dialogue and mediation skills, to quell and or mitigate conflicts during the election campaign".

"The inter-party negotiations around the appointment of the new Prime Minister also involved these skills. Obviously, I did not learn all that I know at the training - however, it did make me contextualise what I knew, and in particular think about the need to deploy different approaches to different conflicts at different times".⁷³

On sustainability, the group spoke in unison: "Ours is a political problem...this is our challenge". Although land and inheritance

disputes are important sources of conflict and disputes, the key to Guinea Bissau stability is to address the political dimension. It is therefore critical to engage decision-makers, Members of Parliament, Political Parties, the Judiciary simultaneously as beneficiaries and contributors to future trainings.⁷⁴ Citizenship training, legal training, ADR training (including mediation, dialogue, facilitation, arbitration) are therefore key.

For a key informant, "political dialogue is key" but "it is often underestimated".⁷⁵ Participants equally concurred that focus on newly-appointed Members of Parliament, was vital so that the country can return to normalcy following the upcoming Presidential elections.

Sustainability was also seen as dependent on follow-up mechanisms, with a need for strategies to be instituted to assure national ownership, and more importantly, the sustainability of mediation and dialogue practices in the country. To this end, participants invited the ECOWAS to support them in the development of a national network to bring together all actors working in this field, as this would facilitate sharing of resources (financial, knowledge and information), joint trainings as well as partnership for joint actions.

The lack of information and know-how on how to access funding for mediation and dialogue activities was observed as a huge challenge in a country where most people speak only Portuguese and Creole.

With reference to the training workshops themselves, participants called on ECOWAS-FBA to develop follow-up activities with the groups already trained to build on the momentum generated. In Bissau, as in other locations, one proposal of how to do this is to adopt a Training of Trainers (ToTs) approach. Participants suggested that training a local cadre of trainers who could then, when the situation arises, be deployed to train specific groups, communities, individuals, would add

sustainability to the programme. A male participant suggested that this could be the beginning of a national network of mediators, experts on dialogue, mediation, negotiation, that could be used also to train new entrants into this field.⁷⁶

Bissau Summary Recommendations

- a. Consider developing/ implementing a Training of Trainers (ToTs) approach to capacity building focusing on organisations /individuals which will then conduct the training in their local areas;
- b. Develop a modular approach where trainings would be increasingly specialised and targeted to specific issues and groups. The template here used as an example is the ECOWAS Trainings on Gender issues;⁷⁷
- c. Include more local and national information and case-studies, by using the experience of individuals and organisations on dialogue, mediation, conciliation and other forms of alternative dispute resolution;
- d. To the extent possible, include a "documentation of mediation practices by local actors" in future trainings/projects, through interviews and other information gathering means (questionnaires, etc.).
- e. Make more documents on dialogue, mediation and electoral violence available in Portuguese

As regards to the political dimension of the crisis in Guinea Bissau, participants called for:

- Development of an advanced training for the June 2018 multi-stakeholder group to better prepare them to play a positive role in the immediate post-presidential electoral period which is considered particularly challenging;

Continuation of support to the National Assembly by organising future trainings, as strengthening Members of Parliament capacities on negotiation, dialogue and mediation skills is a priority.

These recommendations tallied with those made by the Political Advisor to the ECOWAS Special Representative during a preparatory meeting held by the ECOWAS-FBA LLAS team before the FGD meeting. Reflecting on some of the lessons learnt and best practices of this project, the Political Advisor noted how the July 2018 ECOWAS-FBA training in Bissau had introduced an interesting momentum vis-a-vis the awareness around mediation and dialogue capacity-building issues and needs in the country. He recalled that such momentum resulted in the follow-on training workshop with the Women Mediator Network of Guinea Bissau (REMUMA) held in October 2018 and the ECOWAS training for the newly-elected Members of Parliament (resulting from the 10 March 2019 legislative elections) held in Accra, Ghana, from 23 to 26 July 2019.

The Political Advisor particularly noted how, since coming back from Accra, the Members of Parliament that attended the

training (titled "Enhancing Capacity of the Guinea Bissau Parliament to Manage Inter-Party Disputes through the use of Negotiation, Dialogue and Mediation") had been requesting a follow-on training for all Members of Parliament.

Additional recommendations made by FGD participants were as follows:

Organise separate training sessions for different actors (civil society, religious leaders, traditional authorities, youth groups, etc.). In particular, political party youth wings, youth associations and other youth groups should be prioritised.

Continue to support the Women Mediators Network of Guinea Bissau (REMUMA) with the implementation of the various clusters of training activities identified during the October 2018 workshop. In particular, advanced training on Track 1 Mediation and Dialogue, as well as mediation in the area of traditional and customary law and women-specific issues in Guinea Bissau (domestic violence, forced marriages, inheritance, FGM, street children, etc.).



Training workshop for the women mediators' Network of Guinea Bissau (REMUMA)

The Jos Plateau/North-Central Geopolitical Training Workshop

Introduction: The training workshop titled "Dialogue and Mediation for Civil Society Groups, Faith Based and Community Peace Actors in the North-Central Geo-Political Zone" took place in Jos, Plateau State for the North-Central geopolitical zone of Nigeria, including Abuja, the Federal Capital Territory (FCT) from 18 to 20 September 2018. The workshop held against the backdrop of the country's general elections scheduled for 23 February 2019. It was held in partnership with the Institute for Peace and Conflict Resolution (IPCR) and in collaboration with the Plateau Peace Building Agency (PPBA). A total of 40 participants attended the training workshop (26 men and 14 women).

The main objective of the workshop was to strengthen the capacity of key stakeholders in their efforts at preventing and mitigating election-related conflicts. The specific objectives of the training included: creating the opportunity for participants to appreciate the ECOWAS normative principles and frameworks for transparent and peaceful elections; sustain and enhance ECOWAS' strategic engagement with the political process in Nigeria; and ECOWAS commitment and preference for the use of dialogue and mediation in resolving electoral disputes and conflicts in member-states.

The training was also a platform for participants to brainstorm and identify contending issues around the forthcoming elections and the roles they could play in mitigating potential electoral violence before, during and after the elections. Sessions included "Understanding conflict and conflict analysis (West African)", "Understanding election related conflicts" (Nigeria focused); "Design and Processes of Dialogue and Mediation", "Communication Skills", "Dialogue Skills and Practice", and, finally, "Understanding Human Nature and Dynamics". With respect to ECOWAS' specific sessions, participants were briefed on the Protocol on Democracy and Good Governance (2001), as well as on "ECOWAS legal, normative and guiding principles for preventive diplomacy and mediation", including an overview of ECOWAS peace and security architecture.

Assessing Relevance: Timeliness, content, methodology and delivery

Key Informant Interviews, Focus Group Discussions and One-to-One Interviews were held in September 2019 in Abuja with participants who took part in the training held in Jos. In addition, the ECOWAS-FBA LLAS team used the opportunity to interview and engage key staff of the ECOWAS Commission. A total of 14 respondents were engaged, 8 male and 6 female.

The assessment targeted 6 participants for one-to-one interviews. However due to logistical constraints, only 2 interviews were held face-to-face with 1 participant from Benue State and another from Plateau State, while another 2 were conducted over the phone with participants from Kwara and Kogi states. Interviews were also conducted with 2 key staff from the Political Affairs Directorate of the ECOWAS Commission. The FGD brought together 8 participants from Nasarawa, Plateau, Benue and Abuja. Gender was a key consideration in the selection of participants for both the KIIs and FGD as well as in terms of delivery of the training and application of knowledge and skills.

The training was assessed by all the respondents as very relevant. Specifically, the respondents indicated that the practical sessions were very reflective of the Nigerian context and hence very adaptable to their various contexts in Plateau, Niger, Nasarawa and

Benue states as well as the Federal Capital Territory of Abuja.

One of the critical success factors with the training was with the methodology adopted in identifying and selecting participants based on recommendations from established Institutions such as IPCR and WANEP as first step, and then the subsequent vetting of each recommended participant by ECOWAS. This was key in ensuring the right participants as well as good gender balance. The sharing of training materials with participants was cited as a critical factor in facilitating participants' ability to apply the knowledge and skills from the training and also boosted their confidence to engage.

Another dimension of relevance that was unanimously articulated was the timeliness of the training which was organised well before the General Elections and, therefore, provided ample time for effective analysis and responses to mitigate threats of electoral-related violence.

"A participant from Benue State indicated that "the training came at a time when communities wanted to talk, wanted to engage to vent out their concerns".

The knowledge and skills from the training were therefore timely and helped the various actors dialogue and come out with peaceful solutions. Other specific examples cited were community dialogue sessions and townhall meetings in Plateau, Nasarawa and Niger states that brought together INEC officials, political parties, youth and women representatives to discuss key concerns relating to the elections.

The third area of relevance that emerged from the FGD as well as the KIs related to the profile of the participants selected for the training. Respondents highlighted the focus of the training primarily on civil society actors with some level of experience in peacebuilding and who already had a platform for engagement,

particularly at community level. The mix of participants was described as unique by a participant during the KIs and allowed for cross-pollination of ideas. This notwithstanding, some respondents suggested that ECOWAS should consider bringing together State and civil society actors in subsequent trainings to allow for cross learning.

Assessing Outcome: Effectiveness and sustainability

The KIs and FDG respondents unanimously noted that the training had further enhanced their knowledge and skills.

Even though some respondents were already highly-skilled in dialogue and mediation, tailoring the training to election-related disputes and violence was a new area of learning for some of the participants.

A participant from Plateau State affirmed that "the training was useful in terms of my role as a Coordinator on a project to monitor electoral violence and provide responses to mitigate incidences of electoral violence". Some specific responses to questions relating to how the knowledge and skills from the training had been applied included the following:

- a. Enhanced understanding of how to handle and manage issues in relation mediation and conflict in general;
- b. Enhanced skills in facilitating dialogue among key community stakeholders;
- c. Training gave better understanding on how to handle mediation and conflict in general and especially how to engage in dialogue to address communities' needs and concerns.

It was reported that the training is making an impact in the communities where beneficiaries operate – as the knowledge and skills acquired are translating into actions that

are contributing to enhanced community participation and promoting peace in communities. As was the case in Guinea Bissau, a significant outcome is how the training has given an opportunity for civil society to engage more with State officials and increased its contribution to dialogue and mediation processes.

Another example shared was the contribution to peaceful elections as a result of initiatives by one of the beneficiaries from Nasarawa State to hold dialogue sessions with the National Commercial Tricycle and Motorcycle Owners and Riders Association of Nigeria, an informal nationwide group and used by politicians to instigate violence. Also, anecdotal evidence from a beneficiary from Benue State suggests that youth engagement in electoral violence was significantly reduced with step down training and dialogue with youth as contributing factor.

Apart from effectively applying their knowledge and skills in Dialogue and Mediation within an electoral context, some of the beneficiaries have used their learning to contribute to other peacebuilding initiatives at multi-track levels. Examples of these include engaging in dialogue with State officials and community leaders to address a critical humanitarian situation in Benue State, and engaging stakeholders to dialogue on the reintegration of returnee migrants and settling land disputes.

From a gender perspective, the FGD discussed extensively key gender considerations that have either promoted or hindered effectiveness of the training. Most of the participants acknowledged that the content of the training (including role plays) adequately covered the understanding of the gender dimension of dialogue and mediation. Beyond the knowledge on the gender dimension,

it was also evident that the gender considerations integrated into the training have boosted confidence of female beneficiaries to engage in their communities where strong stereotypes are held about women.

Several examples of this were shared. This notwithstanding, female participants also shared the challenges encountered and suggested that the gender component of the training should be further strengthened, and more women should be trained in dialogue and mediation.

The extent to which the training has led to sustainable initiatives was difficult to measure at the time of the study. Nevertheless, it was evident that some processes to ensure sustainability were underway, beginning with the step-down training that all respondents of the Study had undertaken with staff from their respective institutions. In addition, a WhatsApp group was created and is being described as "excellent for networking and peer learning". Through this social media platform, participants have engaged one another, including as trainers while drawing experiences and expertise from one another. The training materials provided to participants continue to serve as critical references that further boost the confidence of participants and allows them to continue to respond to dialogue and mediation needs within their respective communities. This virtual network has been sustained for over a year since the training was held and remains very active for professional experience sharing.

A key challenge shared by participants was the perception of a lack of credibility and lack of recognition of the critical contributions that civil society could bring to a dialogue and mediation process, especially at Track I level. Beneficiaries shared experiences where Election Management Bodies and other Track I actors did not want to engage them. This challenge could have been mitigated had there been a more

effective communication between ECOWAS and INEC. This challenge was particularly heightened for female beneficiaries.

The Jos Plateau/North-Central Geopolitical Summary Recommendations

- a. Organise a follow-up training as the three-day training was insufficient (consider organising trainings at least twice a year or quarterly);
- b. Broaden the scope of the training to cover areas such as farmer-herder conflicts, violent extremism and irregular migration as there is a demand for dialogue around these issues;
- c. Develop a Training of Trainers module to help cascade the training to many more civil society actors and hence increase the opportunities for collective action and impact as well as promote local ownership and ensuring sustainability;.
- d. Engage traditional leaders in the actual training to enable them to share traditional mechanisms for Dialogue and Mediation as part of the training. This could contribute to addressing some of the challenges relating to women's engagement in Dialogue and Mediation;
- e. Prioritise the training of more women and enhance the focus on women's empowerment and women rights of the training content by infusing more case studies and role plays that project women's leading roles as mediators and reflects more the challenges women face on the ground;
- f. Develop a special focus on faith-based institutions to address some of the triggers of religious tensions;
- g. Exploring opportunities to further enhance platforms for engagement or facilitate the creation and operationalisation of platforms for sharing of information on community needs and experiences;
- h. Explore the possibility of issuance of a special ECOWAS certification to trainees to facilitate their recognition and enhance their credibility to enable key institutions such as INEC to use the knowledge and skills of participants trained;
- i. ECOWAS could initiate a Dialogue process around key peace and security issues (farmer-herder, violent extremism etc.) and leverage on its partnership with civil society to sustain the process;
- j. Help document Dialogue and Mediation experiences as a contribution to learning lessons.



Participants at the Training Workshop in Jos, Nigeria

An Institutional Perspective: Summary Recommendations from the ECOWAS Directorate for Political Affairs

Meetings with ECOWAS DPA were undertaken to share the broad objectives and key initial findings of the ECOWAS-FBALLAS to elicit from ECOWAS colleagues, insights and recommendations on the operationalisation of Dialogue and Mediation mandate of ECOWAS.

The key points and recommendations that emerged from these interviews were as follows:

- a. Given that governance is at the heart of challenges in West Africa and agitations towards these challenges reside in communities, the focus of the training on civil society and Track III level actors is crucial. In terms of target group, the careful selection and vetting of actors with convening power and existing platforms for engagement was an excellent approach. Gender balance in the selection of beneficiaries is also critical for enhancing inclusive response mechanisms.
- b. Given the range of election-related management challenges in our region, the scope of the training should be broadened to the entire electoral cycle especially the post-electoral phase. In addition, ECOWAS should explore how to open up dialogue spaces within communities where people can vent and build up capacity of civil society to serve as interface between the communities and their elected representatives. The involvement of ECOWAS through this approach will reflect positively on the image of ECOWAS as living out its vision of an "ECOWAS of the people".
- c. Despite the need to focus on Track II and III levels, there is still the need for expertise at high level to address challenges such as non-acceptance of election results and politicisation of electoral reforms.

Pertaining to this, perhaps a retreat of Heads of State and other Track I actors could be organised to share experiences and design strategies to address these challenges.
- d. In the matter of the gender dimension, ECOWAS needs to continuously reflect on how best to mainstream gender in selected sectoral issues such as dialogue and mediation; this requires strengthening the linkages across the Commission, especially between gender-related units, committees and related structures, and the Political Affairs, Peace and Security Department;
- e. The full operationalisation of ECOWAS Mediation support structure and mechanisms should be prioritised by ECOWAS management;
- f. From a Knowledge Management perspective, ECOWAS should lead a process of documentation of dialogue and mediation experiences, including women-led processes across different tracks in West Africa. This should also include a study of dialogue and mediation practices on the ground, existing gaps and what lessons can be drawn therefrom.

g. At a strategic level, ECOWAS should institutionalise a briefing and debriefing for Envoys on ECOWAS Dialogue and Mediation processes. This could also be extended to ECOWAS Special and Permanent Representatives.

h. In order to deepen this project, ECOWAS should engage Election Management Bodies directly in terms of Dialogue and Mediation and design specific trainings for them, for example, the ECOWAS ECONEC (ECOWAS Network of Electoral Commissions).

CONCLUSION, LESSONS LEARNT AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Conclusion and Lessons Learnt

An important part of the MFD's portfolio of activities has been the promotion of mediation and dialogue in the West Africa region through training, capacity building, knowledge management and lessons learnt. In these efforts and, following ECOWAS focus on election-related conflicts and crises, the DPA/MFD has prioritised Member-States holding presidential and legislative elections with the aim of strengthening the capacities of relevant national and local peace actors (civil society, faith-based organisations, women, men and the youth, traditional and religious leaders) in the prevention and mitigation of violent electoral conflicts.

This "Lessons Learnt and Assessment Study" focused on four such training workshops ECOWAS conducted during the pre-election periods in Mali, Guinea Bissau and Nigeria during 2018, in partnership with the Folke Bernadotte Academy, conducted by a team composed of MFD and FBA staff and consultants, this study qualitatively assesses the trainings in terms of their relevance, methodology and timing as well as outcome, focusing on effectiveness and sustainability.

The study confirmed the relevance of ECOWAS' focus on supporting national institutions during pre-election and election periods, in line with the ECOWAS Supplementary Protocol on Democracy and Good Governance (2001). The need for mechanisms of dispute and conflict resolution – and concurrently of trained practitioners – was high in all three countries concerned, raising the need for continuing support of

dialogue and mediation training to local peace actors, and being of vital importance to Election Management Bodies.

The study found that in all occasions, the trainings provided participants with required information on the electoral systems, laws and regulations in their respective countries. In some instances, the trainings also allowed for connections between civil society actors and Election Management Bodies (national or sub-national level) and other relevant state institutions – connections which are critical for moving forward. Indeed, the study found that civil society organisations find it difficult to relate to official State institutions involved in election processes because the legal and institutional election infrastructure may already define mechanisms for dispute resolution – yet, these are very rarely used, if at all.

Nevertheless, several participants acted in both official and unofficial capacities during the elections (as observers, ward returning officers, etc.) and in these capacities had an opportunity to apply the skills acquired, even when their specific roles during the election prevented them from intervening directly. This raises important issues about the ways mediation and dialogue can be formally or informally integrated in the laws and regulations governing elections.

Moreover, Dialogue and Mediation were considered critical tools of practice over and above the specific environment of elections. The study found how these methods and skills

became useful to the work of representatives of state institutions, Members of Parliament, civil society organisations, religious and traditional authorities, academics and researchers, representatives of women's and youth groups in the conduct of their day-to-day professional activities. Indeed, as will be detailed below, a critical recommendation was for ECOWAS to consider organising separate workshops focusing on other conflict issues affecting the West Africa region.

The potential of this type of intervention to effect gradual change should not be considered to be limited to the individuals who participated in the trainings, even when their actions proved at times crucial to diffuse or manage conflicts in their respective areas of intervention. With adequate follow-up and support, these same beneficiaries have the potential to build networks and platforms of practice, to disseminate messages on the use of dialogue and mediation in support of peaceful and violence-free elections. Indeed, the study found several examples of this as well as participants who began using the skills acquired in other areas of social interaction.

The opportunity to share and discuss with participants the variety and specific strengths and weaknesses of different methods in election-related conflicts – including negotiation, facilitation, mediation, arbitration and dialogue – was a critical part of these trainings. This is because it is not only important that practitioners become aware of the advantages and disadvantages of different methods in different types of disputes and conflicts. There is also a cultural dimension to this discussion across the West Africa region, as traditional conflict-resolution mechanisms tend to resemble arbitration more than mediation per se, as the arbiter (usually a traditional authority or a council of elders) retains the power to make a final decision on a case.

Indeed, Mediation and Dialogue must

not only be culturally sensitive but culturally grounded – a principle that is embraced by ECOWAS itself in its Mediation Guidelines. It is therefore critical to place participants' experiences and understandings at the centre of the training modules – through roundtables, participant-led sessions, story-telling – enabling for a more elective approach to the concepts and practices discussed.

Men and women seem to have experienced the trainings in a similar manner, the modules and methodologies employed having been praised by both. Both male and female participants considered that the training allowed them to express their views, participate and take part in the training activities irrespective of their gender. Yet, the practical application of the skills acquired posed some challenges for a few of the women, confirming the often-cited fact that women tend to face additional hurdles when trying to act as mediators. Possible areas of intervention in women's access to mediation roles at local and national levels include awareness raising, documenting women's experiences as mediators (and lead mediators), and introducing gender-sensitive and gender-specific training to certain groups (traditional authorities, local government).

In addition, bringing diverse (at times competitive and antagonistic) groups together to assess and analyse their current conflict situation, and to discuss and reflect upon on different conflict resolution mechanisms during election periods, seems to be a good example of a reflective practice that should continue. For this, the introduction of a training module focused on participants' joint development of proposals in mediation and dialogue for their respective countries/election management systems proved an opportunity to promote joint-thinking and problem solving alongside building relationships and trust.

Therefore, for the design and delivery of

trainings, it is vital to recognise that the training may evolve into a kind of dialogue in itself. Where inter-personal relations between participants are marked by political tensions, it may be necessary to redesign some of the training sessions to allow for an actual dialogue to take place. This can, for example, be done through mixed group work, assessing key issues and themes ahead of elections, or reflecting on lessons learned and current potential for dialogue in the country. Participants can also be asked to co-develop proposals or action plans on dialogue and mediation for their countries, as suggested above. Trainers, therefore, need to be aware and prepare to adapt the programme in such situations.

For ECOWAS, the study found that the trainings created an opportunity for participants to better understand the organisation, its mandate, institutions and legal and normative instruments (in particular on transparent and peaceful elections) as well as ECOWAS commitment and preference for the use of dialogue and mediation in resolving electoral disputes and conflicts in member-states. As part of a wider set of activities, Dialogue and Mediation Training appears to sustain and enhance ECOWAS strategic engagement with the political process in its Member-States.

Finally, the involvement and buy-in from the ECOWAS Country Offices from the needs assessment/planning stage of the process is crucial for implementing such in-country capacity-building programmes. Often, the country office provides the necessary linkages, logistic support, local context perspectives as well as follow-up mechanisms.

Recommendations

- a. Develop an in-country Training of Trainers programme to cascade the training to more national/local actors. This will help build a pool and network of local trainings expertise, promote local ownership as well as enhance sustainability and visibility;
- b. Develop a modular approach with progressively specialised trainings targeting specific issues and groups (consider the approach of ECOWAS trainings on gender issues);
- c. Retain the flexibility in terms of training duration, but plan for a minimum of 4-5 days to provide ample time for practical sessions, especially for an advanced level/specialised training;
- d. Infuse the training agenda with additional modules focusing on context-specific case studies and experiences of dialogue, mediation, conciliation and other forms of alternative dispute resolution drawn from participants. This can also include involving local expert institutions to provide overview of the local context, culture, religion and the legal system;
- e. Broaden the scope of the training to the entire electoral cycle, to give participants adequate time to network, replicate the training and strategically deploy their dialogue and mediation capacity ahead of elections;
- f. Develop specific trainings on dialogue and mediation for Member-States' Election Management Bodies (EMBs). This should be done in collaboration with the ECOWAS Electoral Assistance Division;
- g. Organise training workshops focusing on specific conflict issues such as intra and inter-communal conflicts; violent extremism; land issues; farmer-herder conflicts; cattle rustling; conflicts related to custom and tradition (FGM, inheritance, gender-based violence);
- h. Prioritise training of women and strengthen

the gender dimensions in dialogue and mediation in the training;

- i. Introduce gender-sensitivity training to certain groups (traditional authorities, local government);
 - j. Prioritise specialised training for the youth (youth wings of political parties, youth associations, other youth groups) and the security sector, political office holders, parliamentarians, religious, traditional authorities and community leaders;
 - k. Develop an electronic repository of relevant training materials to facilitate referencing and facilitate application of knowledge and skills;
 - l. Support the documentation of Dialogue and Mediation practices by local actors and inject these into future trainings/projects. This should also include women-led processes across different tracks in the West Africa region;
 - m. Include follow-up monitoring and evaluation and invest on follow-on activities (networking, research) as part of the training package to ensure achievement of expected training outcomes;
 - n. ECOWAS to leverage existing partnerships to build on achievements and respond to growing dialogue and mediation needs in other issue areas.
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ENDNOTES

¹ECOWAS Authority, Protocol Relating to the Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management, Resolution, Peace-Keeping and Security, Lomé, Togo, 10 December 1999.

²ECOWAS Authority, Protocol on Democracy and Good Governance, A/SP1/12/01, Dakar, 21 December 2001.

³ECOWAS Mediation and Security Council, ECOWAS Conflict Prevention Framework, Regulation MSC/REG.1/01/08, Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso, 16 January 2008.

⁴See in this regard ECOWAS Mediation and Security Council, ECOWAS Conflict Prevention Framework, Regulation MSC/REG.1/01/08, Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso, 16 January 2008.

⁵ECOWAS Commission, ECOWAS International Conference: Two Decades of Peace Processes in West Africa: Achievements, failures, lessons", Monrovia, Liberia, 22-26 March 2010, Conference Report, Abuja, May 2010. For a detailed analysis see Brown, O. "The Institutionalisation of Mediation Support within the ECOWAS Commission", Policy and Practice Brief #042, ACCORD, Durban, South Africa, June 2016.

⁶ECOWAS Commission, ECOWAS International Conference: Two Decades of Peace Processes in West Africa: Achievements, failures, lessons", Monrovia, Liberia, 22-26 March 2010, Conference Report, Abuja, May 2010.

⁷ECOWAS Commission, The Monrovia Declaration, ECOWAS International Conference: Two Decades of Peace Processes in West Africa: Achievements, failures, lessons", Monrovia, Liberia, 22-26 March 2010, Conference Report, Abuja, May 2010.

⁸The Workshop was attended by members of the ECOWAS Council of the Wise, representatives of the United Nations System, ECOWAS technical partners, leading West African civil society organisations and relevant Directorates of the ECOWAS Commission. ECOWAS Commission, Report of the Needs Assessment Workshop for the Establishment of the ECOWAS Mediation and Facilitation Division, Lagos, Nigeria, 30 October to 1 November 2012.

⁹This vision led to the identification of a broad scope

of objective and tasks for the future Division (MFD), including operational support (backstopping of mediation and shuttle diplomacy activities embarked upon by ECOWAS-designated mediators and facilitators, the Council of the Wise and Special Representatives; provision of guidance, background information, analysis and best practices, monitoring and evaluation, as well as the facilitation of the Mainstreaming of Track III mediation efforts into the ECOWAS mediation architecture); (ii) establishment of a mediation resource centre (to entail the creation and management of a database of both female and male resource persons and issues in mediation and a library of mediation resources); and, (iii) capacity building in mediation (to entail facilitating the development of modules for mediation training, the organization of workshops, seminars and conferences on mediation, and facilitating exchange programmes for mediation resources research). See ECOWAS Commission, Report of the Needs Assessment Workshop for the Establishment of the ECOWAS Mediation and Facilitation Division, Lagos, Nigeria, 30 October to 1 November 2012.

¹⁰Brown, O. "The Institutionalisation of Mediation Support within the ECOWAS Commission", Policy and Practice Brief #042, ACCORD, Durban, South Africa, June 2016, p. 6.

¹¹Additionally, the capacity building dimension of MFD is intended to contribute to the development of a mediation database and a subsequent roster by making available trained, skilled and readily deployable experts and mediators at all track levels in support of regional conflict prevention efforts.

¹²ECOWAS Commission, ECOWAS Mediation Guidelines, ECOWAS Commission in partnership with the Crisis Management Initiative, Abuja, Nigeria, February 2018.

¹³ ECOWAS Commission, ECOWAS Dialogue and Mediation Handbook, DPA/MFD, 2017.

¹⁴ For the period 2015-2016 see Brown, O. "The Institutionalisation of Mediation Support within the ECOWAS Commission", Policy and Practice Brief #042, ACCORD, Durban, South Africa, June 2016.

¹⁵These courses were facilitated by the Netherlands Institute of International Relations, Clingendael.

¹⁶ <https://fba.se/en/>

¹⁷ The programme's specific objectives included: (i) provide an opportunity for participants to learn about the democratic convergence principles of ECOWAS, particularly around transparent and peaceful elections as well as the role that the regional organization plays in dialogue and mediation processes in the region; (ii) strengthen participants' capacities in the identification of the causes, the cycles and the challenges of electoral violence and its impact on peace and stability; (iii) strengthening capacities, skills and competencies of participants for dialogue and mediation specifically tailored to electoral processes; (iv) strengthen participants' capacities for the prevention and mitigation of electoral conflicts through group work and role-playing; and, finally, (v) enable participants to better appreciate the strategic and operational dimensions of ECOWAS' engagement in the political process in Mali. See ECOWAS-FBA, *Atelier de renforcement des capacités pour des élections apaisées à travers le dialogue et la médiation en situation de crise*, Concept Note, Bamako, Mali, 2-4 May 2018.

¹⁸ Including staff from the ECOWAS Special Representative's Office, but excluding ECOWAS DPA/MFD staff and FBA staff.

¹⁹ Bamako KII participant, August 2019.

²⁰ Mali FGD participants, 21 August 2019.

²¹ Mali FGD participants, 21 August 2019.

²² Mali FGD Participants, 21 August 2019.

²³ Mali FGD Participant, 21 August 2019.

²⁴ Mali FGD Participants, 21 August 2019.

²⁵ The Lagos workshop was a follow-up to those held in Enugu, Enugu State (South-East zone); Benin City, capital of Edo State (South-South zone) Jos, Plateau State (North-Central zone) and Kaduna, in the North-west zone.

²⁶ See in this regard, ECOWAS Commission, FBA and IPCR Dialogue and Mediation Training for Civil society Organisations, Faith-based and Community Peace Actors", Agenda, Lagos, 4-6 December 2018.

²⁷ Lagos Key Informant Interview, ECOWAS DPA/MFD staff, 2 September 2019.

²⁸ Lagos One-to-One Interview, 4 September 2019.

²⁹ Lagos One-to-One Interview, 4 September 2019.

³⁰ Lagos Post-Workshop Evaluation, 6 December 2018.

³¹ Lagos FGD Participant, 3 September 2019.

³² Lagos One-to-One Interview, 4 September 2019.

³³ Lagos FGD Participant, 3 September 2019.

³⁴ Lagos FGD Participant, 3 September 2019.

³⁵ Lagos Post-Workshop Evaluation, 6 December 2018.

³⁶ Lagos FGD Participant, 3 September 2019.

³⁷ Lagos Post-Workshop Evaluation, 6 December 2018.

³⁸ Lagos FGD Participant, 3 September 2019 and Lagos One-to-One Interview, 4 September 2019.

³⁹ Lagos FGD Participant, 3 September 2019.

⁴⁰ Lagos One-to-One Interview, 4 September 2019.

⁴¹ Lagos FGD Participant, 3 September 2019.

⁴² Lagos FGD Participant, 3 September 2019.

⁴³ Lagos One-to-One Interview, 4 September 2019.

⁴⁴ Lagos One-to-One Interview, 4 September 2019.

⁴⁵ Lagos FGD Participant, 3 September 2019.

⁴⁶ Lagos FGD Participant, 3 September 2019.

⁴⁷ Lagos FGD Participant, 3 September 2019.

⁴⁸ Lagos FGD Participant, 3 September 2019.

⁴⁹ Lagos FGD Participant, 3 September 2019.

⁵⁰ Lagos FGD Participant, 3 September 2019.

⁵¹ Lagos One-to-One Interview, 4 September 2019.

⁵² Lagos One-to-One Interview, 4 September 2019.

⁵³ Lagos FGD Participant, 3 September 2019.

⁵⁴ Mentioned by one interviewee as a crucial area moving forward. Lagos One-to-One Interview, 4 September 2019.

⁵⁵ One participant called for “opening up the training to academic institutions”, “the University of Ibadan should have a mediation centre, and its senior staff trained, student bodies, etc”. Lagos FGD Participant, 3 September 2019.

⁵⁶ See in this regard Gomes Porto, J. “Guinea Bissau Assessment”, 8 June 2016 and Brown, O., “ECOWAS’s efforts at resolving Guinea Bissau’s protracted political crisis, 2015-2019”, Conflict Trends, ACCORD, 2019/2.

⁵⁷ See in this regard, ECOWAS-FBA, Dialogue, mediation and the electoral process in Guinea Bissau: Summary of Recommendations”, August 2018.

⁵⁸ Sessions included “ECOWAS and the Prevention and Management of Electoral Violence: Sources, challenges and cycles of violence”; “Guinea Bissau: Overview of current situation, key opportunities and challenges leading to the 2018 elections”; “Guinea Bissau and the 2018 Elections: Overview of the Electoral Management System”; “Guinea Bissau ahead of the 2018 Elections: Assessment of key issues and themes”; “Planning for Mediation and Dialogue Processes: The strategic and operational dimensions”

⁵⁹ Amongst others, participants were concerned about the lack of trust between political parties’ representatives, increasingly aggressive as well as alienating and polarizing media statements made by politicians and party representatives hampering dialogue and constructive debate.

⁶⁰ ECOWAS-FBA, Dialogue, mediation and the electoral process in Guinea Bissau: Summary of Recommendations”, August 2018.

⁶¹ Such as “Identifying the causes and applying the cycles of electoral violence on the Guinea Bissau context”; “Systematising knowledge with regard to the analysis (structural and proximate) of the situation

in Guinea Bissau and the importance of on-going conflict analysis/assessment in mediation and dialogue”; “Sharing and reflecting on experiences, best practices and lessons learned in mediation, negotiation and dialogue in Guinea Bissau”.

⁶² Bissau FGD Participant, 12 September 2019.

⁶³ Bissau FGD Participant, 12 September 2019.

⁶⁴ Bissau Key Stakeholder Meeting I, 12 September 2019.

⁶⁵ Bissau FGD Participant, 12 September 2019.

⁶⁶ Bissau Key Stakeholder Meeting I, 12 September 2019.

⁶⁷ Bissau FGD Participant, 12 September 2019.

⁶⁸ Bissau FGD Participant, 12 September 2019.

⁶⁹ Bissau FGD Participant, 12 September 2019.

⁷⁰ See in this regard, ECOWAS, DPA/MFD, Dialogue and Mediation Roundtable: The Women Mediators’ Network and the Electoral Process in Guinea Bissau, 8 to 11 October 2019, Workshop Recommendations, 29 October 2019.

⁷¹ Bissau FGD Participant, 12 September 2019.

⁷² Bissau FGD Participant, 12 September 2019.

⁷³ Bissau FGD Participant, 12 September 2019.

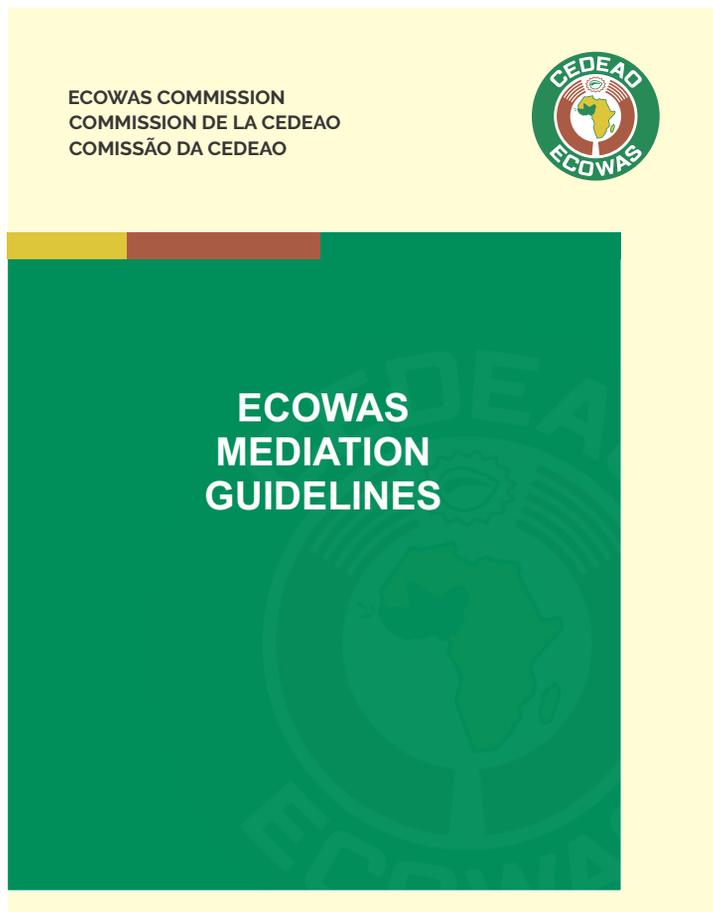
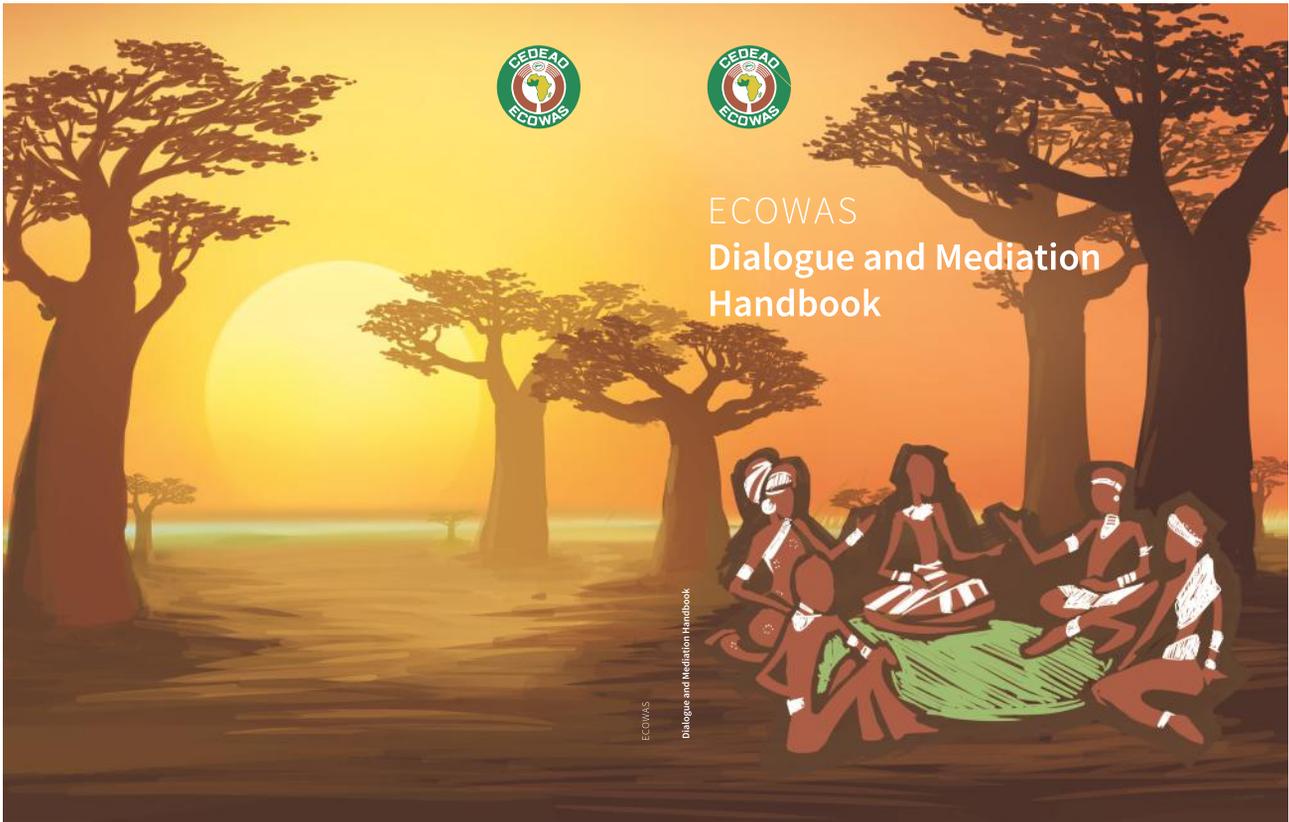
⁷⁴ Bissau FGD Participant, 12 September 2019.

⁷⁵ Bissau Key Stakeholder Meeting II, 12 September 2019.

⁷⁶ Bissau FGD Participant, 12 September 2019.

⁷⁷ Bissau FGD Participant, 12 September 2019.

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