



**ECONOMIC COMMUNITY OF
WEST AFRICAN STATES (ECOWAS)**

**OPERATIONAL MANUAL
FOR ECOWAS NATIONAL UNITS**

ECOWAS COMMISSION, ABUJA

JANUARY 2015



ECONOMIC COMMUNITY OF WEST AFRICAN STATES (ECOWAS)

REGULATION C/REC.11/12/13

OPERATIONAL MANUAL
FOR ECOWAS NATIONAL UNITS

ECOWAS COMMISSION, ABUJA, NIGERIA

REGULATION C/REC.11/12/13

Published by
ECOWAS COMMISSION, ABUJA, NIGERIA

101 Yakubu Gowon Crescent,
Asokoro
P.M.B 401,
Abuja, NIGERIA

website: www.ecowas.int

TABLE OF CONTENTS

PREAMBLE.....	4
CHAPTER 1: OBJECTIVES AND GUIDING PRINCIPLES.....	6
CHAPTER 2: MISSION, ROLES AND FUNCTIONS.....	8
CHAPTER 3: FUNCTIONAL AND OPERATIONAL STRUCTURE OF THE ECOWAS NATIONAL UNITS.....	14
CHAPTER 4: INTER-INSTITUTIONAL COORDINATING MECHANISM.....	19
CHAPTER 5: FUNDING AND FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT.....	26
CHAPTER 6: HORIZONTAL AND EXTERNAL COOPERATION.....	29
CHAPTER 7: FINAL PROVISIONS.....	31

PREAMBLE

MINDFUL of Articles 10, 11 and 12 of the Revised ECOWAS Treaty establishing the Council of Ministers and defining its composition and functions;

MINDFUL of Recommendation C/REC.1/11/82 on the establishment of ECOWAS National Structures to coordinate and follow up ECOWAS activities in the Member States;

MINDFUL of Decision A/DEC.3/12/90 on the upgrading of the status of ECOWAS National Units in the Member States;

MINDFUL of Decision C/DEC 6/12/90 on the institutionalization of the meeting of Heads of ECOWAS National Units;

MINDFUL of Regulation C/REG.5/8/97 relating to the conditions for the payment of a subsidy of 10,000 Units of Account to National Units;

MINDFUL of Regulation C/REG 4/06/05 relating to the Mission, Roles and functions, of ECOWAS National Units;

MINDFUL of Regulation C/REG.24/24/11/10 relating to the adoption of guiding principles for the operation of ECOWAS National Units;

CONSIDERING that the National Units established in the Member States are faced with structural and operational challenges;

NOTING that the structural weaknesses of the National Units impede the visibility and ownership of ECOWAS initiatives at national level;

NOTING the persistent discrepancies in the mandate and institutional arrangements made for the National Units, thereby preventing them from effectively performing their functions;

CONSIDERING the need to combine the various Community Decisions and Acts governing the National Units into a comprehensive set of rules aimed at rationalizing and strengthening the role of the National Units;

CONSCIOUS of the need to enhance the operational capacities of the National Units and endow them with the same mode of operation by harmonizing the structures, the administrative operations, and the financial management, with a view to facilitating the attainment and the coordination of ECOWAS regional integration agenda;

RECALLING Council Directive of 26 November 2010 on the development of an Operational Manual for the National Units;

ON THE RECOMMENDATION of the Meeting of the Council of Ministers held on the 17th Day of December 2013 in Abidjan

HEREBY enacts as follows:

CHAPTER I

OBJECTIVES AND GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Article 1: Objective

This Operational Manual enshrines the guidelines and the mode of operation for National Units with the principal aim of ensuring the:

- i. Harmonization of the structure, the role and the functions with a view to enhancing the performance of their mission and fulfilment of their mandate;
- ii. Standardization of the procedures and mode of operation;
- iii. Establishment of the inter-institutional coordinating mechanisms to enable an effective monitoring of the implementation of ECOWAS programmes at national level.

Article 2: Guiding Principles

The operations of the National Units are governed by the following guiding principles: Accountability, Efficiency, Autonomy, Continuity and Transparency.

- i. **Responsibility:** Each Member State shall endow its National Unit with the necessary status, structures and resources to enable it effectively carry out its responsibilities to the State concerned and ECOWAS in keeping with the functions set out in this Manual.
- ii. **Efficiency:** As a structure for coordinating ECOWAS activities in the Member State, the institutional anchoring of the National Unit in the governmental machinery of the State in question should be sufficiently

appropriate and high to guarantee for it authority, efficiency and maximum visibility in the fulfillment of its mission.

- iii. **Continuity:** The Member States shall ensure the continuity of the action of the National Unit and the functional stability with a view to safeguarding the needed institutional memory for an effective and coordinated monitoring of regional integration.
- iv. **Autonomy:** The National Unit shall enjoy a degree of necessary administrative, financial and functional autonomy to enable it play a crucial role in taking initiatives, coordinating and monitoring effectively the implementation of ECOWAS programmes in conjunction with the various national actors/stakeholders in the regional integration process (governmental and non-governmental structures, non-state actors etc.).
- v. **Transparency:** The National Unit shall apply transparent and controllable procedures in the execution of its activities, particularly in the management as well as efficient and judicious use of resources made available to it for the attainment of its objectives.

CHAPTER 2

MISSION, ROLES AND FUNCTIONS

Article 3: Mission

The mission of the National Unit shall be to ensure that each Member State fully participates in, and contributes to, the regional integration process to enable it derive optimum benefit from its membership of ECOWAS.

Article 4: Role

In fulfilling its mission, the National Unit shall promote ECOWAS activities in the State concerned. In that regard, it shall, among other things, be responsible for:

- i. Associating and involving all national stakeholders at governmental (ministries, administrations etc.) and non-governmental (non-state actors, private sector, civil society etc.) levels in all integration and regional development matters;
- ii. Ensuring ECOWAS visibility at national level and facilitating the ownership of regional programmes;
- iii. Serving as interface between the aforementioned stakeholders and the various Community Institutions, in particular the ECOWAS Commission;
- iv. Facilitating the inclusion of the regional dimension in the various national policies;

- v. Coordinating, facilitating and ensuring the monitoring of the implementation of ECOWAS programme at the national level under the supervision of the parent Ministry.

Article 5: Functions

Under the supervision of the Ministry in charge of ECOWAS Affairs, National Units shall be responsible for undertaking the following activities:

5.1 Function of Information, Communication and Sensitization

With a view to ensuring ECOWAS visibility in the Member State and strengthening the programme ownership process, the Unit shall, *inter alia*:

- i. Acquire and disseminate information through the appropriate means and the national and local media to the general public on ECOWAS vision, strategies, programmes and activities;
- ii. Organize, alone or in conjunction with ECOWAS, regular sensitization campaigns on regional integration issues for targeted groups;
- iii. Establish and operate a documentation centre on ECOWAS for the general public including intellectuals, academia and professionals;
- iv. Develop and regularly update a website focusing particularly on the activities of the Unit and the various stakeholders involved in the integration process as well as integration efforts at national level;
- v. Coordinate the collection and transmission of all information (data, statistics) on the various sectors of ECOWAS intervention required by the Commission on the Member State concerned.

52 Function of Development and Follow-up of ECOWAS Programme

To ensure the effective participation of the Member State concerned in ECOWAS programmes and assume its responsibility for their implementation, the National Unit shall, among other things:

- i. Participate in the formulation and adoption of regional strategies and programmes;
- ii. Help mainstream national priorities and proposals into regional strategy design;
- iii. Highlight the responsibility of the Member State concerned in ECOWAS programme/activity implementation at national level;
- iv. Facilitate and coordinate programme implementation monitoring through the establishment of appropriate mechanisms and the mobilization of the various national stakeholders (government bodies, ministerial departments, non-state actors) for implementation;
- v. Ensure the transmission of various ECOWAS legal instruments and texts to all the national stakeholders involved in the process of Community programme implementation and their incorporation in national development legislation and policy;
- vi. Establish a monitoring and evaluation system for the key ECOWAS integration programmes;
- vii. Facilitate the preparation of regular progress reports on the implementation of integration programmes at national level while ensuring their regular transmission to Community Institutions, the Commission in particular.

5.3 Function of Participating in the ECOWAS Decision Making Process

To enable the Member State concerned play an effective role in the ECOWAS decision-making process at all levels, the National Unit shall:

- i. Facilitate the effective participation of the Member State concerned at an appropriate level and according to the technical expertise required in the formulation and adoption of ECOWAS regulatory texts and programmes in various areas of regional integration;
- ii. Initiate the necessary background studies for the identification of national interests and concerns regarding issues relating to the ECOWAS integration process;
- iii. Facilitate, through the appropriate mechanisms, the formulation of national positions in the preparation of ECOWAS meetings on various regional integration issues;
- iv. Convene, on a regular basis, the coordinating meetings for the relevant Technical Committees to discuss national issues of regional interest.

5.4 Function of Meeting National Obligations

The ECOWAS National Unit shall ensure that the Member State concerned promptly honours all its obligations to the Community. In particular, it shall among other things:

- i. Facilitate and monitor the ratification, domestication and ownership process of Community texts at national level in close collaboration with the competent structures (Ministry of Justice, sector Ministries, Parliament);

- ii. Encourage and monitor, through appropriate mechanisms and means, the effective implementation of the various ECOWAS Protocols and Decisions by the different competent structures.

5.5 Function of Coordination, Mobilization and Assistance

The ECOWAS National Unit shall mobilize, coordinate and provide the necessary technical assistance to all the stakeholders involved in the integration process. In that regard, it shall among other things:

- i. Encourage the participation of the various segments of society in Community programmes and regional events;
- ii. Facilitate the establishment and organization of interest groups (socio-professional associations, non-state actors, private sector, civil society etc.) interested in, and working on, the different regional integration issues;
- iii. Facilitate the establishment of appropriate and functional inter-institutional coordination mechanisms on the ECOWAS integration process and be involved in the functioning of the existing ones;
- iv. Contribute to the regular review of regional integration programmes and initiate, for the Ministry in charge of ECOWAS Affairs, analysis and concept papers on the development and evaluation of ECOWAS programmes at the national level;
- v. Review the modalities for the organization of ECOWAS statutory and technical meetings in the Member State concerned, in conjunction with the relevant national authorities and Community Institutions.

5.6 Function of Interface

The National Unit, through the Ministry in charge of ECOWAS Affairs, shall serve as a link between ECOWAS and the various national stakeholders involved in the ECOWAS areas of intervention. It must, among other things:

- i. Establish systematic and permanent links between the various national stakeholders involved in the ECOWAS integration process;
- ii. Maintain collaboration and working relationship with the ECOWAS focal points in the Member State concerned;
- iii. Maintain relations of collaboration with the ECOWAS Agencies, Centres, Institutions and special Representations in the Member States where they exist.
- iv. Support the Community Institutions in their relations with other regional or international organizations established in the Member State concerned and intervening in issues relating to integration.

CHAPTER 3

FUNCTIONAL STRUCTURE

Article 6: Structure

- 6.1:** As the central coordinating organ responsible for the implementation and monitoring of ECOWAS programmes and activities, the Member State shall establish a permanent functional structure endowed with adequate financial and human resources.
- 6.2:** The Bureau of the National Unit shall be organized around a minimal and expandable structure dealing with the following issues:
- i.** Economic Affairs and Market Integration;
 - ii.** Social Integration and Political Affairs;
 - iii.** Documentation and Communication;
 - iv.** Administration and Finance;
 - v.** Legal matters.
- 6.3:** Subject to the provisions of the Article above, the Member State concerned shall, as much as possible and in the best of cases, ensure that there is a link between the structure of the National Unit and that of the Commission's sectoral departments.

Article 7: Staff

The Bureau shall have the following minimum staff complement:

- i. The Head (Head of the Unit);
- ii. The Deputy Head;
- iii. One Programme Officer Economic Affairs and Market Integration;
- iv. One Programme Officer Social and Political Integration ;
- v. One Administration and Finance Officer;
- vi. One Communication/ Documentation Officer;
- vii. One Legal Expert;
- viii. One Bilingual Secretary;
- ix. One Office Assistant (support staff).

Article 8: The Head of the National Unit

- 8.1:** The Head of the National Unit shall be responsible for the overall management of the Unit and for the Ministry in charge of ECOWAS Affairs, shall serve as the principal intermediary between the ECOWAS Institutions and the various national stakeholders involved in the integration process.
- 8.2:** In the performance of his functions, the Head of Unit, with a rank no lower than Director, shall enjoy a high status commensurate with his responsibilities and job stability to safeguard continuity in the Unit's activities.

Article 9: The Deputy Head

The Deputy Head shall assist the Head of the Unit in the performance of his functions. He shall be responsible for the coordination of the monitoring of ECOWAS programmes implementation at the national level.

Article 10: The Programme Officer Economic Affairs and Market Integration

10.1: The Programme Officer Economic Affairs and Market Integration shall monitor the implementation of ECOWAS programmes in the sectors referred to in paragraph 10.2.

10.2: He shall therefore serve as the interface between the focal points of the various sectorial ministries and other non-governmental stakeholders involved especially in matters relating to:

- i. Trade;
- ii. Free movement of persons and goods;
- iii. Monetary and economic union;
- iv. Industrial development;
- v. Private sector development;
- vi. Agriculture and environment; and
- vii. Regional infrastructure development.

Article 11: The Programme Officer Social Integration and Political Affairs

- 11.1:** The Programme Officer Social Integration and Political Affairs shall monitor the implementation of ECOWAS programmes in the sectors referred to in paragraph 11.2.
- 11.2:** He shall therefore serve as the interface between the focal points of the various sectorial ministries and other - non governmental stakeholders involved especially in matters relating to:
- i. Peace, Security and Good Governance;
 - ii. Education, Science and Technology;
 - iii. Health, Human Development and Gender;
 - iv. Human Rights and Justice; and
 - v. Institutional and Parliamentary Relations

Article 12: The Administration and Finance Officer

- 12.1:** The Administration and Finance Officer shall be responsible for the operations of the Bureau, in particular human resources, administration, budget and accounting.
- 12.2:** Assisted by an Accountant, he shall monitor the implementation of the Community Levy Protocol, thereby serving as the interface between the focal points of the structures involved such as the Customs services, the Public Treasury and the Central Bank.

Article 13: The Documentation/Communication Officer

- 13.1: The Documentation/Communication Officer shall be responsible for the Unit's Documentation Centre and shall ensure the implementation of the Unit's strategy as well as information and sensitization campaigns.
- 13.2: He shall therefore serve as the interface between the various press and media outlets as well as the research and academic centres, and the socio-professional associations.

Article 14: The Legal Expert

- 14.1: The Legal Expert shall monitor the ratification and domestication process of the ECOWAS legal texts in the Member State concerned.
- 14.2: He shall therefore serve as interface between the different departments and competent structures involved in the process.

Article 15: Professionals Skills

In accordance with the provisions of Article 7, the National Unit shall have a critical size of at least seven (7) professionals covering the major priority sectors of ECOWAS intervention. The professionals to be recruited shall be public servants with:

- i. Sufficient skills in the various identified areas of specialization;
- ii. Good knowledge of the national, regional and organizational environment and broad general knowledge of regional integration issues, in particular ECOWAS;

- iii. Proven experience in the respective fields and project management; and
- iv. A University Degree in Economics/Social Science/Law/Management or any other equivalent qualification based on the field of competence.

Article 16: Specific Qualifications

To ensure the smooth performance of the Bureau's mandate, the Professionals must possess the following specific qualifications:

- i. The Head of the ECOWAS National Unit must possess a Master's Degree in Economics/Social Science/International Relations/Law/Management, or any equivalent degree, with a minimum of eight (8) years working experience in public administration;
- ii. The Deputy Head shall possess a Master's Degree in Economics/Social Science/ International Relations/Law/Management, or any other equivalent degree, with a minimum of six (6) years working experience in a relevant field.
- iii. Programme Officers shall possess a Masters Degree in Economics / Social Science / Law / Management or any other equivalent qualification, with a minimum of four (5) years working experience in the respective fields referred to in Article 6.2 or any relevant field;
- iv. The Bilingual Secretary shall possess a First Degree, with a minimum of three (3) years working experience and good command of the official working language of the Member State concerned and the ability to use either of the other two Community languages.

CHAPTER 4

INTER-INSTITUTIONAL COORDINATING MECHANISM

Article 17: Coordinating Committees

17.1: To ensure effective collaboration between the various stakeholders involved in the regional integration process and thereby strengthen the integrated implementation of ECOWAS programmes at national level, the National Consultative Committee on Regional Integration (NCCRI) shall be established.

17.2: The NCCRI shall be supported in its operation by, among others, the following two sub-committees:

- i. The Sector Programme Committee (SPC)
- ii. The Budget and Finance Committee (BFC)

17.3: The NCCRI shall establish, where necessary, other national sub-committees on sectoral issues with a view to facilitating its operations on the impetus and implementation of specific ECOWAS programmes.

17.4: All national Committees existing in the field of integration shall serve as NCCRI sub-committees.

Article 18: The National Consultative Committee on Regional Integration (NCCRI)

- 18.1:** The NCCRI shall be the Central Coordinating Committee on regional integration policy in the Member State concerned.
- 18.2:** As the supreme Coordinating Committee, the NCCRI shall among other things:
- i. Serve as a platform for sharing information among the various national stakeholders on the regional integration process;
 - ii. Provide strategic guidance to strengthen the integration process in the Member State;
 - iii. Supervise the monitoring and evaluation of ECOWAS programme implementation;
 - iv. Review the annual programmes and the various sectoral status reports on the implementation of Community programmes and projects for onward submission to ECOWAS;
 - v. Review the annual programme of activity of the National Unit and define the orientations and priorities.
- 18.3:** The NCCRI shall mainly comprise representatives of the various ministerial departments and other national non governmental stakeholders, including the following members:
- i. The Minister in charge of ECOWAS Affairs;
 - ii. The Minister of Foreign Affairs;

- iii. The Minister of Finance;
 - iv. The Representatives of the different Sectoral Ministries;
 - v. Two Representatives of Parliament;
 - vi. Chairpersons of the various existing or yet-to-established ECOWAS sectoral Committees;
 - vii. Presidents/Heads of the various Private Sector Organizations, in particular the Chamber of Commerce, associations; and
 - viii. Heads of Civil Society Organizations involved in integration.
- 18.4:** The meetings of the NCC shall be chaired by the Minister in charge of ECOWAS Affairs or his/her duly-mandated Representative.
- 18.5:** At the invitation of its Chair, the NCCRI shall meet at least twice every year, preferably before the ECOWAS statutory meetings. The NCCRI may also meet when the need arises.
- 18.6:** The National Unit shall serve as the Permanent Secretariat to the NCCRI.

Article 19: The Sector Programme Committee (SPC)

- 19.1:** The SPC shall be the technical coordinating body and shall rely on the various identified sectoral focal points from the various national stakeholders involved in the ECOWAS integration process.
- 19.2:** The SPC shall, among other things:

- i. Serve as a regular interaction forum between the various stakeholders on the ECOWAS sectoral policies;
 - ii. Initiate discussions on ECOWAS thematic issues;
 - iii. Make recommendations and proposals for strengthening the integration process in the Member State;
 - iv. Ensure regular monitoring of ECOWAS programme implementation;
 - v. Regularly review the progress reports on the implementation of ECOWAS sectoral programmes;
 - vi. Prepare sectoral reports on the implementation of ECOWAS programmes.
- 19.3:** The SPC shall mainly comprise:
- i. The Head of the National Unit;
 - ii. Focal points on ECOWAS matters; identified in all the ministerial departments;
 - iii. The Representatives of the various existing or yet-to-be-established ECOWAS Sectoral Committees/Commissions;
 - iv. Representatives of the various Non-State Actors, in particular the private sector, civil society, socio-professional associations, the media, etc.
 - v. Representatives of any other structure deemed relevant in the integration process.

- 19.4:** The meetings of the SPC shall be chaired by the Head of National Unit
- 19.5:** At the invitation of its Chair, the SPC shall meet once every quarter and in extraordinary session when the need arises.
- 19.6:** The Secretariat services of the SPC shall be provided by the National Unit assisted by the focal point of the sectoral department concerned depending on the issues discussed.

Article 20: The Budget and Finance Committee (BFC)

- 20.1:** The BFC shall be the coordinating body for budget and financial matters regarding the operation and implementation of the mandate of the National Unit.
- 20.2:** The BFC shall, among other things:
- i. Review the budgetary and financial matters of the National Unit;
 - ii. Consider the annual budget as well as the programme of activities of the National Unit on regional integration;
 - iii. Submit the annual budget and activity programmes to the NCCRI for adoption;
 - iv. Monitor the status of implementation of the National Unit's budget;
 - v. Undertake a biannual review of the financial reports for onward submission to the NCCRI and the ECOWAS Commission;
 - vi. Ensure regular submission of Community Levy statements.

20.3: The BFC shall comprise:

- i. The Head of the National Unit;
- ii. One representative of the Ministry in charge of the budget;
- iii. One representative of the Treasury Department;
- iv. One representative of the Customs Administration in charge of the Community Levy;
- v. One representative of the Central Bank;

20.4: The BFC may also invite any other person from any relevant structure.

20.5: The meetings of the BFC shall be chaired by the Head of the National Unit

20.6: At the invitation of its Chair, the BFC shall systematically meet once every six months, and in extraordinary session when the need arises.

20.7: The Administrative and Finance Officer of the National Unit shall be the secretary of the BFC.

Article 21: Rules of Procedure

For effective operation of the various coordinating committees, the National Unit shall, through its parent Ministry, ensure that each Committee has its own rules of procedure.

CHAPTER 5

FUNDING AND FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

Article 22: Financial Resources

- 22.1:** The National Unit shall be endowed with the necessary financial resources to carry out its mission and the tasks assigned to it.
- 22.2:** The financial sources shall mainly come from:
- i. The budget of the Member State concerned;
 - ii. ECOWAS, through subvention from Community Levy (CL) proceeds and annual grant;
 - iii. Any other source, especially public or private.

Article 23: Utilization of the Resources

The resources shall be utilized in conformity with the annual budget programme of the National Unit adopted by the NCCRI.

Article 24: Utilization of the Public Funds

The utilization of public funds allocated to the National Units by the Member State shall serve to cover in particular recurrent expenditure and administrative expenses, Staff emoluments, coordination costs and other operational expenses.

Article 25: Utilization of Regional Resources

- 25.1:** ECOWAS shall pay 4.5% of the CL from the Member State in question to the National Unit to facilitate the financing of activities relating to regional integration promotion within the Member State.
- 25.2:** The subvention received from the Community Levy proceeds shall mainly be used to cover:
- i. Capacity building activities;
 - ii. Workshops;
 - iii. Sensitization and information campaigns;
 - iv. Activities for the visibility and ownership of ECOWAS programmes;
 - v. Studies/missions initiated to deepening the regional integration process in the Member State.
- 25.3:** The regional resources shall also be used to cover operational expenses, in particular those relating to the coordinating mechanism, as well as some allowances allocated to the staff of the ECOWAS Unit.
- 25.3:** The ECOWAS Commission, through the External Relations Directorate, shall support the National Units through the participatory and capacity building programme.

Article 26: Management of Resources

- 26.1:** The ECOWAS funds shall be lodged in a dedicated account opened in the name of the ECOWAS National Unit.
- 26.2:** The account shall be managed by the Ministry in charge of ECOWAS Affairs with two signatories, one of whom shall be the Head of the National Unit. The Minister in charge of ECOWAS Affairs shall appoint the second signatory in conformity with the rules governing financial and accounting transparency.
- 26.3:** For the purpose of sound financial management and accountability, the National Unit shall be obliged, among other things, to:
- i. Keep a good record of the books and accounting documents relating to the receipt and use the subventions/payments received;
 - ii. Undertake, on the regular basis, bank reconciliations and prepare an annual statement of accounts;
 - iii. Prepare quarterly financial and accounting reports.
- 26.4:** The ECOWAS Commission shall audit the Community resources allocated to the National Unit to ensure that the funds have been used efficiently and in accordance with the appropriate financial regulations and procedures.
- 26.5:** The Commission may request an external auditor to audit the Community Levy account managed by the National Unit.

CHAPTER 6

HORIZONTAL AND EXTERNAL COOPERATION

Article 27: National Units Network

- 27.1: In the performance of their duties, the National Units shall establish among them a network to share experiences and best practices and promote the regional integration process.
- 27.2: The network of National Units shall, among other things:
- i. Regularly share information on national experiences in regional integration;
 - ii. Forge close cooperation, particularly through the organization of joint activities on specific regional integration issues;
 - iii. Participate in the annual meetings of the Heads of National Units as provided for by Decision C/DEC.6/12/90;
 - iv. Hold regular consultations among the Units.

Article 28: Cooperation with Community Institutions

- 28.1: The National Units, through their parent Body, shall foster close cooperation with Community Institutions, in particular the ECOWAS Commission, whose External Relations Directorate shall serve as interface.
- 28.2: Relations shall be established between the National Units and the Directorates of External Relations for an exchange of information,

advice and technical support for the effective implementation of the mandate of the National Units and the harmonious implementation of ECOWAS programmes in the Member States.

Article 29: Cooperation with Other Regional Organizations

- 29.1:** The National Units shall also establish, through the Ministry in charge of ECOWAS Affairs, partnerships with other regional or sub regional and international organizations involved in integration issues.
- 29.2:** Beyond the statutory relations with ECOWAS Institutions, the Units shall foster close collaboration with other similar regional and/or sub-regional and international organizations with a view to ensuring an enhanced interface between the various stakeholders in the West African integration process.

CHAPTER 7

FINAL PROVISIONS

Article 30: Entry Into Force

This Manual shall be published by the ECOWAS Commission in the Official Journal within thirty days (30) of its signature by the Chairman of the Council of Ministers.

It shall equally be published by each Member State in its Official Gazette within thirty (30) days after notification thereof by the Commission.

