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## NEWS

### Mitigating Election Violence through National Early Warning Systems (NEWS)

West African countries have experienced frequent incidents of violent conflict. Although the causes of state fragility and political instability in the region are deeply rooted and structural in nature, there have been occasions when large scale violence and instability have been sparked by elections or election-related processes. Despite best intentions embodied in the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) Protocol on Democracy and Good Governance, and the Conflict Prevention Framework, violence is still commonplace during elections in the region. Conflict early warning and response are therefore seen as critical conflict mitigation priorities by West African governments. Strengthening early warning and response around key elections in the region will help to increase stability and reduce the potential for future conflicts.

### PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

Mitigating Election Violence through National Early Warning Systems is a five-year, \$2.5 million project implemented by the West African Network for Peacebuilding (WANEP). The aim of the project is to mitigate election violence in target countries in West Africa, including Burkina Faso, Cote d'Ivoire, Niger, Ghana, and Sierra Leone. WANEP will assist community organizations to identify potential election violence risks by developing and monitoring a set of customized indicators and analyzing the resulting data. If monitoring in a given area reveals a heightened risk of violence at any point in the election cycle, WANEP will develop recommendations for peace-building activities to prevent it, and will channel these

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recommendations to targeted national and regional stakeholders for early action before the situation escalates.

## PROGRAM OBJECTIVES

- Increase early response advocacy of NEWS to targeted decision makers.
- Enable national early warning systems to recommend responses to key stakeholders to mitigate potential election violence triggers.
- Standardize and improve early warning data collection and reporting.

## PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

- WANEP has successfully completed electoral violence programming in Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire and Niger.
- WANEP is well underway in preparing for the December 2016 presidential elections in Ghana.

## PROGRAM INFORMATION

### GOAL

Enhance early warning and response systems to reduce the risk of violence in West Africa.

### LIFE OF PROGRAM

February 2015 – February 2020

### TOTAL USAID FUNDING

U.S. \$2.5 million

### GEOGRAPHIC FOCUS

West Africa (Burkina Faso, Cote d'Ivoire, Niger, Ghana, Sierra Leone)

### IMPLEMENTING PARTNER

West Africa Network for Peacebuilding (WANEP)

