



# Analysis of Electoral Dispute Indicators for Ghana 2012 Elections

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Political strife and conflict in West Africa used to centre on the abuse of power by autocratic regimes. This gave the sub-region a post-independence chequered history characterized by repressions and resistance, numerous coups d'état and insurrections, and indeed protracted internecine civil wars. This condition of high valency in violent political conflict was largely attributed to the process of power transition under autocratic and militaristic dispensations. That being the case, multi-party democracy was hailed as the panacea to the problem of political violence in West Africa, and it was with great expectation that the people of the sub-region welcomed the gradual wave of transition to democratic governance witnessed since the beginning of the 1990s after the fall of the Berlin wall. From that time till now, however, there have been plenteous hiccups and backslides in the democratization of West African polities. Quite worrisome is the fact that election disputes in the sub-region have come to be marked by spates of violence, so much so that the electoral season in many a West African countries occasion great fear for life and property among the populace.

In view of the strategic importance of the December 2012 elections in Ghana,

WANEP with support of the Strengthening Transparency Accountability and Responsiveness in Ghana (STAR-Ghana) funded project entitled "**Transforming the Culture of Political Violence: Building Capacity for Response**" developed a set of 39 indicators in order to monitor and report on the electoral processes with a view to preventing/mitigating electoral and political violence thereby contributing to a peaceful elections and democratic consolidation

The indicators cover various aspects of electoral processes from campaign, to voting and post-election periods, specifying the kind of issues and stakeholders to monitor in the election. The indicators were clustered into three main sub-headings: 1) *indicators on social issues, governance and election management bodies and other stakeholders*; 2) *indicators on media, publicity and negative statements* and 3) *indicators on security concerns*. WANEP carried out its internal monitoring process for over two months and also compared it with the Conflict Assessment it conducted in partnership with USAID through the Early Warning and Response Design Support (EWARD) using the West Africa Conflict Assessment toolkit (WACA).

In order to link response to alerts, committees of eminent persons were trained by WANEP in August 2012 from each of the 10 regions of Ghana. These eminent persons receive information generated from the monitoring process and intervened through dialogue and mediation in their respective communities.

A stakeholder's meeting comprising of Civil Society Actors with background and experiences in electoral disputes was organized to analyze the indicators and validate the pattern and trends of the electoral disputes. Based on the opinion of the CSOs, scenarios were generated and an action plan developed to facilitate coordinated responses.

As indicated in the summary section of the analysis report below, a total of nine indicators were identified as the most critical pointers to monitor in the context of the 2012 Ghanaian elections given the record of incidences related to them.

## 2. WHAT IS AN INDICATOR?

There is no such a thing as a '**sudden crisis**', only a lack of information or analysis. **Indicators** are changes we observe in communities and in the institutions/structures of the state

## West Africa Early Warning & EARLY RESPONSE Network (WARN)

The West Africa Early Warning Network (WARN) is an integral part of the West Africa Preventive Peacebuilding Program co-ordinated by the West Africa Network for Peacebuilding (WANEP). Through its WARN Program, WANEP is setting the stage for a civil society-based early warning and response network in Africa with emphasis on human security.

WARN covers the entire Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) sub-region including Cameroon and Chad. Our focus was initially the Mano River Basin countries of Sierra Leone, Guinea, Liberia, and Côte d'Ivoire. We have since expanded to cover the entire West Africa sub-region.

Since 2002, WANEP entered into an agreement with ECOWAS through the signing of a Memorandum of

Understanding (MOU) in the framework of capacity building in Conflict Prevention. One of the goals of this agreement is to interface WARN with the ECOWAS Early Warning Systems to optimize early warning conflict prevention in West Africa. In view of this development, WANEP has been operating a liaison office located at the ECOWAS Secretariat in Abuja, Nigeria since April 2003.

In recognition of the role and achievements of the West Africa Network for Peacebuilding (WANEP) in Conflict Prevention and Peacebuilding in Africa, particularly in West Africa, the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations at its substantive session of 2006 granted WANEP Special Consultative Status to the UN. WANEP is therefore mandated to designate official representatives to the United Nations in New York, Geneva and Vienna to further its advocacy and outreach strategies for peace and human security.

which, when continued over time may increase the risk of violent conflict. For example the number of young boys out of schools in a community or the number of ex-combatants in the community who are not disarmed, demobilized and reintegrated, or the number of returnees after a violent conflict without homes in a given society or community.

### 2.1 Types of Indicators

**Structural indicators:** these are root causes or the conditions in the society that could give rise to conflict. They are also called the incentives for conflict. Example: Corruption, bad governance, poverty etc.

**Proximate Indicators:** these are referred to as 'issues' in conflict analysis. They are the factors around which violent conflict is being mobilized. Example, Lack of clarity in electoral laws, poor transition plans, biased Electoral Commission, etc.

**Accelerators:** these are the manifestations of the proximate factors. Accelerators are the indicators that are close to the escalation of conflict. Example, the assassination of a strong political figure, the change in laws to favour the government in power.

### 2.2 Indicators for Monitoring Ghana 2012 Elections (The indicators cover pre, during and post elections)

- Poverty/Unemployment
- Use of State resources by incumbents during campaigns
- Ineffectiveness of Security Forces/Culture of Impunity
- Unequal access to State media
- Weak Governance practices and pervasive Corruption
- Ethnicization and Regionalization of political affiliations
- Weak Judicial Systems and weak penalties
- Lack of confidence in the Institutions that manage the elections
- Massive vote rigging
- Small Arms and Light Weapons Proliferations
- Negative and insightful statements by political actors
- Negative media campaign and jingles
- Formation/Registration of party followers along ethnic/religious biases
- Late night meetings by a particular ethnic or political group
- Disagreement over the nomination and participation of Electoral Commissioners, party flag-bearers and other party officials/representatives
- Disappearance and arbitrary arrest of major political actors
- Rumour circulation over policy statements
- Campaign propaganda
- Unofficial announcement, delay in announcing and rumours over election results
- Purchase and presence of illegal arms
- High presence of unemployed youth (youth budge)
- Constitutional reform in favour of incumbent
- Presence of illegal voters
- Intimidation and harassment of political opponents
- Discrimination against female political actors
- Disagreement over the use of census result for the election
- Disagreement over demarcation of borders and delimitation of constituencies
- Tampering with election posters and other publicities (paraphernalia)
- Negative statements along ethnic lines
- Use of unofficial securities
- Late arrival of voting materials
- Difficulties associated with voting logistics
- Rumours
- War of words or threat or bragging
- Accumulation of weapons
- Hiding of Arms
- Lots of meetings of especially men and mobilized groups
- Disappearances of young men from school and community
- Generalized panic

### 3. ANALYSIS OF INDICATORS ON THE 2012 GHANA ELECTIONS

Table 1: Nine indicators with major threats to the Ghana 2012 elections selected from the three categories

SN°	INDICATORS	BRIEF ANALYSIS	OPTIONS FOR RESPONSE	TIMEFRAME
1	Proliferation and use of political pressure groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Formation and membership of pressure groups is seen as a sign of commitment and allegiance to political parties</li> <li>Political parties also see pressure groups as source of mobilization of membership</li> <li>Political pressure groups are being increasingly used by political parties in mischievous ways. E.g. A group raised an issue on alleged platform for one of the presidential candidate during IEA presidential elections</li> <li>Political Pressures groups are not publicly condemned</li> <li>Support/ platform offered by increasing party affiliates to media e.g. Serial callers</li> <li>High rate of youth unemployment</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Political parties should publicly condemn their actions and disassociate themselves from such groups</li> <li>Activities by political pressure groups that border on criminality should be impartially dealt with by the police</li> <li>Police should enforce the Public Order Act especially in the organization of rallies and other political activities</li> <li>There should be no rival political party rallies on the same day in the same district/constituency</li> <li>As a long term measure, public debates on how to minimize and streamline the formation of these political pressure groups should be established</li> </ul>	<p><b>Now</b></p> <p><b>Long term</b></p>
2	Campaign propaganda/Rumours	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The era of secret tapes: e.g. the media should paint the government in a good light; a tape that purports a strategy to enable one of the parties lose the elections; infiltration of national security; and recruitment of external mercenaries</li> <li>False statements</li> <li>Accusations and counter accusations</li> <li>Unnecessary spinning</li> <li>The presence of these tapes can cast doubt over the credibility of the electoral process and results; national, regional or constituency or polling station results could be contested with the usage of thugs to intimidate, snatch ballot boxes and disrupt the elections; there could be a mass rush for thugs or private security in defiance of national laws, this exposes the contingency plans political parties have to win the</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>State agencies should investigate and make public outcomes/actions taken on secret tapes</li> <li>Political parties should thoroughly investigate and make public sanctions meted out to party functionaries.</li> <li>Political parties should enforce diverse party laws and show evidence of correction</li> <li>State security should discourage the use of private security through the provision of adequate and effective State security</li> <li>Civic and civil society institutions should step-up voter education for electorates so as to empower all stakeholders about the <b>dos</b> and <b>don'ts</b> of the electoral process.</li> <li>State institutions should investigate rumours about ethnic or tribal statements and prosecute the culprits</li> </ul>	<p><b>Now</b></p>

SN°	INDICATORS	BRIEF ANALYSIS	OPTIONS FOR RESPONSE	TIMEFRAME
2		<p>elections at all costs thereby undermining the peace and security of the country</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The rumours amongst particular ethnic groups not to vote for other ethnic groups because of past conflicts. Rumours about chieftaincy factions in Buipe, Abudu and Andani, and Kusasi and Mamprusi support bases of NDC and NPP. These rumours have the tendency to create anxieties over the electoral process and for the rejection of results and subsequent tensions.</li> </ul>		
3	Ethnicization and Regionalization of political affiliations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Campaigns have been characterized by ethnic hate speeches</li> <li>Ethnic interpretation of election results (by popular sentiments)</li> <li>Allegations on parties founded along ethnic lines</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A media offensive against the Ethnicization of elections results</li> <li>CSOs to advocate for the acceptance of the will of the people</li> <li>Party leadership, candidates, to advocate for the acceptance of the will of the people</li> <li>Local opinion leaders to call for restraint</li> </ul>	<b>Now and Always</b>
4	Small Arms and Light Weapons Proliferations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Inaccurate/conflicting statistics on arms circulation in the country.</li> <li>Lack of awareness of laws and regulations on SALW and permit granting processes among the populace</li> <li>Local manufacturing of arms</li> <li>Porous nature of borders</li> <li>Increasing reports of illegal arms transportation in and across the country. Arrests of truckloads of arms in the country</li> <li>Lack of enforcement of regulations regarding possession and misuse of SALW and other dangerous weapons such as cutlasses</li> <li>There are accusations/rumours of importation of weapons such as cutlasses by both political parties</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Constitutionally mandated institution (National Commission on Small Arms, Police) should intensify education on acquisition and use of weapons and the effect of misuse of arms and other weapons</li> <li>CSOs should play complementary roles in sensitizing the populace</li> <li>The Ministry of Interior should halt licensing of arms</li> <li>Political parties should dis-associate/disown themselves from individuals and groups that use arms</li> <li>Security agencies and agents should be equipped to implement laws and detect arms as well as patrol borders during the electoral periods</li> <li>Increase check points to hot spots</li> <li>Increase security in flash points</li> </ul>	<b>Throughout the electoral process</b>

SN°	INDICATORS	BRIEF ANALYSIS	OPTIONS FOR RESPONSE	TIMEFRAME
5	Unequal access to State media/Abuse of incumbency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The reality this year is that the state media is providing balanced access to all political parties' activities according to reports of Ghana Integrity Initiative (GII), Centre for Democratic Development (CDD) and Ghana Anti-Corruption Coalition (GACC)</li> <li>It is difficult to determine what constitutes governmental activity and what the party in government does as a party that constitutes abuse of incumbency on state media</li> <li>Some minor parties sometimes do not have activities to be covered and then accuse others of abuse of incumbency</li> <li>The thank you tour of President Mahama after the death of Prof. Mills is widely speculated to be an abuse of incumbency as he has been accused of using the platform to campaign</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>State owned media should comply with constitutional provision on access to state media by political parties</li> <li>Civil society institutions and the National Media Commission (NMC) should provide oversight responsibility in that regard</li> <li>As a country, there should be distinct clarification on what constitutes abuse of incumbency and assign to, or create a formalized body to oversee that</li> <li>The publicity of the criteria is also important in that regard</li> </ul>	<p><b>Now</b></p> <p><b>Long term</b></p>
6	Tampering with election posters and other publicities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Destruction and removal of opponents' party paraphernalia</li> <li>These are party wrangling and attempts to intimidate and create agitations, disaffections and eventually fist cups, discredit electoral results and lead to escalated violence along group lines.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Parties should establish internal structures to educate members to tolerate opposition's activities</li> <li>Parties should encourage the use of party or state structures (E.g Ghana Police Service) to address inter-party grievances</li> <li>Proactive policing should be encouraged.</li> <li>Parties should adhere to the provisions of the Code of Conducts of political parties</li> </ul>	<b>Throughout the electoral process</b>
7	Disagreement over demarcation of borders and delimitation of constituencies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Controversies surrounding the creation of the new 45 constituencies.</li> <li>High tendency of disagreement if ruling party wins in majority of newly created 45 constituencies</li> <li>Protest of results in the new constituencies</li> <li>Provocative reactions upon proclamation of results</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Alert local police command to control the protest</li> <li>Engage the candidates and leadership to talk to their supporters to avoid use of violence</li> <li>Engage local opinion leaders</li> </ul>	



SN°	INDICATORS	BRIEF ANALYSIS	OPTIONS FOR RESPONSE	TIMEFRAME
8	Lack of confidence in the institutions that manage the elections	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Allegations of corruption leveled against two directors of the Electoral Commission (EC)</li> <li>Alleged partisanship of polling staff</li> <li>Delay in delivery of voting materials</li> <li>Shortage of electoral materials</li> <li>Slow/delay in voting process</li> <li>Controversy over counting and collation of results</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Investigation into the corruption allegations should be made public and offenders punished accordingly to reinstate trust in EC by electorates</li> <li>EC officials should clearly explain and apologize for voting day challenges and resolve them as early as possible</li> </ul>	Throughout the process
9	Use of unofficial securities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Parallel security is not recognized by constitution, yet there has been increasing use of Parallel-security across board during registration and election periods</li> <li>Increasing reports of political Parallel-securities in atrocities since 2004 e.g. Odododiodo, 2012 registration exercises in Tafo Pankrono, Kumasi, burning of EC office in 2008 at Tain constituency.</li> <li>Snatching of ballots boxes, report of road blocking in Volta and Ashanti regions</li> <li>There are fears of Parallel-security members terrorizing communities hence people are arming themselves in readiness.</li> <li>Lack of punitive measures for alleged misconduct of political parallel- security members</li> <li>Mistrust in national security agencies.</li> <li>People are preparing and arming to protect themselves</li> <li>Use of unregistered vehicles and motor bikes to commit havocs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Police must apply laws rigorously and deal with all atrocities and criminal offences impartially</li> <li>Intensive advocacy by CSOs for Political parties to allow the police to carry out their constitutional mandate and minimize use of Parallel-security</li> <li>Strong social protection for police.</li> <li>CSO should advocate against victimization of police who carry out their mandates</li> <li>Security agencies should provide security for political parties as mandated by constitution</li> <li>Un-uniformed security persons should be tagged and identified</li> <li>Arrest should be made of users of unidentified vehicles</li> </ul>	Throughout the process

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Table 2: Other indicators that were analysed with less likelihood of violence

SN°	INDICATORS	BRIEF ANALYSIS	OPTIONS FOR RESPONSE	TIMEFRAME
<b>INDICATORS ON MEDIA, PUBLICITY AND NEGATIVE STATEMENTS</b>				
1	Negative statements inciting ethnic and political divisions by political actors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Evidence from Media Foundation for West Africa (MFWA) monitoring of media language show this is a reality. For example, there is the <b>all-die-be-die statement</b>, “<b>you are a fool</b>” “<b>stupid fool</b>” “<b>there are many ways of killing a cat</b>” <b>ethnic pronouncements and insightful statement</b>, “<b>yen Akanfuo die</b>” etc.</li> <li>These statements have the tendencies to deepen divisions and ethnic rivalries and subsequent violence.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Constitutional provision regarding pronouncements against groups by political parties should be enforced</li> </ul>	<b>immediate</b>
2	Negative media campaign and jingles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Political ownership of media outfits that gives room for negative reportages through first and repeat broadcast of negative adverts, statements, pronouncements, etc. that have the tendency to incite individuals and groups.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Internal media managements should control and avoid the broadcast of negative statements</li> <li>Civil society media organizations should intensify monitoring and publicly name and shame media houses that repeatedly broadcast negative statements</li> </ul>	<b>Immediate</b>
<b>INDICATORS ON SOCIAL ISSUES, GOVERNANCE AND ELECTION MANAGEMENT BODIES AND OTHER STAKEHOLDERS</b>				
3	High level of Poverty/Unemployment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lead to vote buying</li> <li>“foot-soldierism”</li> <li>Alcoholism and substance abuse</li> <li>Allegation of vote selling and vote buying</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Long term measures towards growth and poverty reduction</li> <li>Candidates and parties should refrain from instigating the youth to violence and vote buying</li> <li>Citizens should refrain from selling votes so they have the moral right to demand accountability of their leaders</li> </ul>	<b>Immediate, Medium to Long Term</b>
4	High presence of unemployed youth (youth bulged)	Related to the above		

SN°	INDICATORS	BRIEF ANALYSIS	OPTIONS FOR RESPONSE	TIMEFRAME
5	Weak Governance practices and pervasive corruption	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Non-adherence to rule of law</li> <li>• Selective justice</li> <li>• Manipulation of state institutions by incumbent</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Advocate for strict adherence to rule of law</li> <li>- Advocate for strict impartiality on the part of state institutions</li> <li>- Advocate against incumbent abuse</li> </ul>	Always
6	Disagreement over the nomination and participation of Electoral Commissioners, party flag-bearers and other party official/representatives	<p>Parties:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Violation of party constitutional provisions</li> <li>• Protest over the violation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Advocate for strict compliance to party constitutional provisions</li> <li>• Use of internal party channels to resolve disputes or use judicial processes if internal party channels fail</li> </ul>	Immediate
7	Weak Judicial Systems and weak penalties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The judiciary is effective and have proven to be so in past elections</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintain and improve on effectiveness especially in the speedy discharge of election related cases</li> </ul>	
8	Formation/Registration of Party Followers along ethnic and religious biases	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Absence of rules and regulations on establishing party in all regions/ district</li> <li>• Domination of party executive by people of particular regions and districts</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Country to adopt strict regulation on establishment of parties across all regions</li> <li>• Political parties should aim at ethnic and regional balance at the level of executive leadership</li> </ul>	
9	Political marginalization of women and People With Disabilities (PWD)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Underrepresentation of women and PWDs in parliament and Presidency</li> <li>• Underrepresentation of women and PWDs in party executive positions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Appeal to government and political parties to institute affirmative action to increase number of women and PWDs in political positions</li> </ul>	Immediately results are known
10	Disagreement over the use of census result for the election	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Complaints over population distribution across ethnic groups and regions</li> <li>• Demarcation of district and constituencies based on controversial census results</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Call on census authorities to respond to complaints</li> <li>• Opinion leaders to dialogue with census authorities</li> </ul>	Always
11	Constitutional reform in favor of Incumbent	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Removal of term limit</li> <li>• Change of elections date to favor incumbent</li> <li>• Ghana's democracy has outgrown this risk</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Advocate strict adherence to ECOWAS and AU supplementary protocols on Governance</li> <li>• Compliance with national constitution</li> <li>• No constitutional change within 2 years of election</li> </ul>	



SN°	INDICATORS	BRIEF ANALYSIS	OPTIONS FOR RESPONSE	TIMEFRAME
<b>INDICATORS ON SECURITY CONCERNS</b>				
12	Ineffectiveness of Security Forces/Culture of Impunity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Generally the police dispense their duties professionally. However there are isolated cases of unprofessionalism</li> <li>High perception of ineffectiveness of police service that has heightened public mistrust and increase use of parallel-security</li> <li>High ignorance of election security architecture among the Ghanaian populace</li> <li>Accepted challenges of structural design of police eg. appointment Inspector General of Police (IGP), inability to form unions to channel grievances</li> <li>Inadequate equipment and lack of refresher courses/ capacity of security personnel</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Intensify capacity of security agencies on electoral issues</li> </ul>	<b>Regularly as need arises</b>
13	Purchase, accumulation and hiding of illegal arms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Under reported small arms proliferation.</li> </ul>		
14	Disappearance of young men from school and community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No report of such incidences yet</li> </ul>		
15	Late night/secret meetings by a particular ethnic or political group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Few reports of groups holding secrets meeting</li> <li>Reports of secret training camps in volta region, Ashaiman and parts of the northern region</li> <li>Presence of refugees and suspected mercenaries in the country</li> <li>Rumors of political parties planning to use mercenaries from Cote d'Ivoire and Liberia earlier this year (2012)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Security agencies should intensify investigation on alleged training camps and curtail the situation</li> <li>Police should liaise with UNHCR to clearly define who is a refugee and monitor them</li> </ul>	

SN°	INDICATORS	BRIEF ANALYSIS	OPTIONS FOR RESPONSE	TIMEFRAME
16	Generalized panic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reported cases of violence during the registration period, eg. odododiado</li> <li>Report of registration of minors - alleged plans to prevent alleged minors from voting</li> <li>Alleged alien and multiple registration</li> <li>Increasing Incitement and hate speech in the media</li> <li>Increasing use of social media to spread rumours e.g. In 2008 rumors of violence in volta and Ashanti created panic</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Educate and sensitize citizenry to rely on official sources of information rather than rumors</li> <li>Naming and shaming of groups that are involved in the propagation of hate speech</li> </ul>	
17	Disappearance and arbitrary arrest of major political actors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Mode of arresting especially members of opposition creates unwarranted suspicion among opposition and populace</li> <li>Handling of suspects also creates suspicion resulting in negative public response to the extent of destroying public properties</li> <li>There is the perception that security organizations are politicized</li> </ul>		
18	Intimidation and harassment of political opponents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reported cases of harassment perpetuated by party affiliate groups</li> <li>Social gathering such as keep fit activities are becoming increasingly political and being used to harass political opponents</li> <li>Increasing verbal harassment on the media</li> <li>Invasion of opponent party offices / premises</li> <li>Destruction of opposition party paraphernalia</li> <li>Preventing people from registering and voting in other party strongholds</li> </ul>		

#### 4. CONCLUSION

The Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), the African Union (AU) and the international community has increasingly focused on election disputes in recent years. This attention results from the political disagreement and sense of cynicism surrounding the complaints and appeals procedures in many countries in the sub region. Not only have legal systems and electoral management bodies often been at odds with each other, but there have also been occasions of inconsistencies and gaps in local laws that have resulted in multiple appeal processes, confusing term-limits, and duplicative grievances filed with different bodies, an absence of clear sanctions for non-compliance with the law, and enforcement problems. One indication of the seriousness of these concerns is the number of complaints left unresolved months after the ballot as well as the current case at the Supreme Court on the 2012 elections. WANEP continues to encourage investment in alternative dispute resolution mechanisms that build trust and foster relationships.

#### WANEP FINDINGS and CONCLUDING STATEMENT ON THE GHANA 2012 ELECTIONS

The West Africa Network for Peacebuilding wishes to make its statement on the Ghana 2012 elections based on observations it conducted in all the regions of Ghana. Beginning 2011, WANEP developed and published the **Election Dispute Management Practice Guide** for West Africa, which was officially launched in February 2012 by the Most Reverend Professor Emmanuel Asante, the Presiding Bishop of the Methodist Church Ghana and Chairman of the National Peace Council. The Practice Guide was designed to assist in the peaceful management of electoral processes based on WANEP's experience in responding to election disputes across the sub region. Since the launch, thousands of copies have been distributed to all the Electoral Commissions in West Africa and specifically to the National Commission on Civic Education, Political Parties, the National Peace Council, the media and civil society organizations in Ghana.

In the build up to the Ghana election, WANEP regional secretariat and its national network in Ghana developed electoral dispute indicators and through its Peace Monitoring Center monitored, analyzed and reported on the electoral processes countrywide. The information generated through the monitoring mechanism was shared with relevant stakeholders including the ECOWAS Directorate for Early Warning with the aim of preventing and or mitigating electoral violence. WANEP trained and facilitated the intervention of 20 eminent persons selected from the 10 regions of Ghana with support from Star-Ghana who engage in dialogue and mediation based on the information from the Peace Monitoring Centers.

Additionally, WANEP deployed local and regional election observers on voting day to monitor incidents related to electoral disputes and report same through our toll free lines to the WANEP situation room for analysis and response.

Similarly, in an effort to build consensus among the political parties in monitoring election results with the purpose of reducing tensions and anxiety on disputed figures, WANEP and the Catholic University College in collaboration with the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) created a joint monitoring platform with five political parties; the National Democratic Congress (NDC), the New Patriotic Party (NPP), the Convention People's Party (CPP), the People's National Convention (PNC) and the Progressive People's Party (PPP). A Memorandum of Understanding to define the rules of engagement for the Joint Party Election Results Monitoring (J-PERM) was signed in Accra by the political parties, WANEP, UNDP and endorsed by the Electoral Commission of Ghana.

**WANEP is therefore delighted that these efforts and those of various stakeholders have paid off as Ghana again excelled in the deepening of its democratic culture and we make the following observations:**

- Having participated in the ECOWAS observer's mission, we endorse the findings and recommendations of the President Obasanjo led ECOWAS Observer Mission
- The preparatory phases of the election met internationally acceptable standards and provided the ground for a transparent election
- The political parties demonstrated high level of decorum in running their campaigns which were considered to be more of issue-based as compared to the 2008 election.
- Ghanaians demonstrated high sense of responsibility by voting peacefully and being patient and tolerant in the face of long delays and some technical hitches in the voting process.
- There was high voter turn-out and the election was conducted with full and active participation of all stakeholders, especially during vote counting
- The security agencies demonstrated high level of professionalism in the discharge of their duties and provided further credence to the process including the way and manner they dealt with the skirmishes that arose in some parts of the country

**WANEP notes the following challenges and call on the Electoral Commission and incoming Government to address them in order to improve on the effectiveness of subsequent elections:**

- Late arrival of election materials and EC officials in some parts of the country
- Breakdown of the biometric verification devices at some polling stations during voting and also the malfunctioning of the back-up verification devices which led to the postponement of voting in some polling stations to Saturday, 8th December.
- Huge concentration of voters in some polling stations led to long queues and late voting
- Insufficient communication by the electoral commission on polling stations affected by the

- malfunctioning of the biometric verification devices
- Burning of ballot boxes and attempted ballot box snatching in some areas
- Insufficient education of polling officials on the use of biometric verification devices (BVD) and on the electoral laws

**In the light of the above, WANEP recommends the following:**

- Political parties and candidates to accept the verdict of the people and resort to legal means including prioritising dialogue and mediation in dealing with the disputes.
- Review electoral laws in Ghana aimed at addressing incidences of electoral violence
- Creation of more polling stations

to reduce the high concentration of electorates in one polling station

- Increase the number of security officers per polling centre to prevent ballot box snatching and curtail incidences of violence
- Ensure proper and adequate education of polling officials on the use of voting equipment and on electoral laws and procedures

In congratulating Ghanaians for exercising their franchise in a way that strengthens the democratic credentials of the country, WANEP is of the view that the challenges experienced do not constitute a factor that could discredit the integrity of the election outcome. WANEP appreciates its partners in the 2012 election including the eminent persons from the 10 regions of Ghana,

the ECOWAS Commission, members of the Civic Forum Initiative, STAR-Ghana, the Swedish International Development Agency, the UNDP, partners at the J-PERM and WANEP national networks across the sub region.

WANEP remains committed to working with the people and government of Ghana and indeed all the ECOWAS Member States in the realization of the ECOWAS dream of economic development and regional integration.



Building Relationships for Peace

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