DRAFT REPORT

A STUDY ON THE

Study on the Interlinkages between the Development, Peace and Security, Human Rights and Humanitarian Pillars in the Sahel and West and Central Africa Subregions

SUBMITTED TO:

The NEPAD Section of the Regional Integration and Trade Division of

the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa

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1. ACRONYMS

AU   African Union

AUC   African Union Commission

AUDA-NEPAD African Union Development Agency

AUHA African Union Humanitarian Agency

CAR   Central African Republic

CSO   Civil Society Organizations

CEWC Continental Early Warning System

DRC   Democratic Republic of the Congo

ECA   Economic Community of Africa

ECPF ECOWAS Conflict Prevention Framework

EWS   Early Warning System

EU   European Union

EUTF   EU Trust Fund for Africa

ECCAS Economic Community of Central African States

ECOWAS Economic Community of West African States

FAO   Food and Agriculture Organization

FFD   Financing for Development

HC/RC Humanitarian/Resident Coordinator

HDPN Humanitarian-development-peace nexus

HRP   Humanitarian Response Plan

IASC   Inter-Agency Standing Committee

ICCG   Inter-Cluster Coordination Group

IHL   International Humanitarian Law

IHRL   International Human Rights Law

IDP   Internally displaced person(s)

IGO   Intergovernmental Organization

IOM   International Organization for Migration

LGA   Local Government Areas

MCRP Multi-Crisis Response Project for the NorthEast

MINUSMA United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission

MoPIED Ministry of Planning and Investment and Economic Development

NEPAD New Economic Partnership for African Development

NGO   Non-Governmental Organization

PCNI Presidential Committee for the\North East Initiative (Nigeria)

OCHA United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs

OECD Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development

OSSA Office of the Special Adviser on Africa

PSC Peace and Security Council

REC   Regional Economic Community

RITD   Regional Integration Trade Development

RRF Resilience and Recovery Framework

RRR Ministry for Recovery, Reconstruction and Resettlement (Borno State, Nigeria)

RCO Resident Coordinator's Office

SDGs Sustainable Development Goals

SSR Security Sector Reform

SRSG Special Representative of the Secretary General

UN United Nations

UNCT United Nations Country Team

UNDAF United Nations Development Assistance Framework

UNDP United Nations Development Programme

UNSDPF United Nations Sustainable Development Partnership Framework

UNSC United Nations Security Council

JTF   Joint Task Force

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Conflicts have been a problem in west and central Africa, including the Sahel. They have frequently been accompanied by insecurity at large, increasing poverty and underdevelopment, human rights abuse, including extra-judicial killings by state and non-state actors as well as ever expanding humanitarian problems (which could be both causal and consequential). These major interlinked issues, referred to as pillars in this study have constituted threat to humanity in the two subregions. Appreciable relative progress over recent years in managing conflicts in these subregions have remained insignificant when compared to the extent of the challenges. Existing national, subregional, regional and international efforts, so far, have not succeeded in preventing the deteriorating conditions with respect to peace and security, development, human rights and humanitarian support in the west and central African subregions.

It is against this background that a holistic approach towards the delivery of assistance becomes imperative. Experience has shown that frameworks, tools as well as investments that focus on individual pillar of development, peace/security, human rights and humanitarian concerns, in silos are not sufficient in addressing the growing human security problems in the subregions. A holistic effort is aimed at combining each pillar in an integrative manner so as to take advantage of synergies and avoid challenges of the clearly interlinked four-pillars.

The international community and global actors since the World Humanitarian Summit in September 2016, are increasingly accepting the commitment to a New Way of Working (NWOW) that provides for immediate humanitarian needs, whilst also reducing risks and vulnerabilities, through more effective collaboration or joined-up approaches across the humanitarian–development–peace nexus (HDPN). The double resolutions on Sustaining Peace at the United Nations Security Council and General Assembly also emphasized the significance of insecurity as a driver of vulnerability.[1] The resolutions demanded that the development, peace and security, and human rights pillars work in an integrated or joined up system to prioritize prevention, address root causes of conflicts and support institutions for sustainable peace and development.[2]

Additionally, the United Nations Secretary General and the African Union Commission Chairperson also committed to work together towards the implementation of Agenda 2063 and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, in recognition of the interrelationships between development, peace and security, human rights and humanitarianism. In furtherance of the partnership, the two principals signed the Joint United Nations-African Union Framework for Enhanced Partnership in Peace and Security (the Peace and Security Framework) and the African Union-United Nations Framework for the Implementation of Agenda 2063 and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (the Development Framework). The Joint Human Rights

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[1] The twin resolutions on Sustaining Peace (General Assembly Resolution 70/262 and Security Council Resolution 2282) define sustaining peace as "encompassing activities aimed at preventing the outbreak, escalation, continuation and recurrence of conflict".

[2] Perret, Liam. Operationalizing the Humanitarian–Development–Peace Nexus: Lessons learned from Colombia, Mali, Nigeria, Somalia and Turkey. IOM, Geneva. P.8

Framework is expected to be signed soon. Furthermore, there exists an MOU between the United Nations (UN) and the African Union Commission (AUC) on Humanitarian Action.[3]

It is against this background, that the study explores the interlinkages between the four pillars in the west and central African subregion. The motivation is to drive national, sub-regional, regional and international stakeholders and activities towards complementary implementation of interventions in the search for effective and lasting solutions to conflicts in the subregions. Crosscutting issues to be factored in the studies include, the dynamics of transboundary and intra-regional issues, gender and youths and the realities of the current COVID-19 pandemic.

However, any comprehensive four-pillar interlinkages analysis must include two broad situational foundation factors. Prime in this respect are governance and institutional factors. Under governance, the quality of leadership, the pervasive problem of corruption, capacity to harness human and material resources as well as external dynamics that looks at the impact of terror franchises, especially in west and Sahel Africa, major power struggles to incorporate Africa in turbulent world order as well as lingering colonial vestiges etc., must be in focus. So also are the capacities of public, private and social institutions to deliver progressive support for pillar-interlinked programmes and projects. Without a clear consideration of these situational foundation concerns, theoreticians and practitioners alike would find it difficult to understand why budgets have not been driving west and central Africa towards development, peace and security, respect for human rights and the building on resilience to counter humanitarian disasters.

With the aide of desk review of relevant literatures, wide consultations with the UN ECA experts, engagements with Regional Economic Communities (RECs); Regional Mechanisms; and wide-ranging partners, through virtual meetings, interviews and administration of online questionnaires, as well as careful analysis, this study provides a roadmap for exploring the interlinkages of the four pillars of development, peace and security, human rights and humanitarianism.

The study also examined the opportunities and challenges to achieving the four pillar interlinkages, especially with specialized case studies of Mali, Nigeria, Central African Republic, and Cameroon. There are existing normative frameworks and structures at national, subregional, regional and international levels on the four pillar issues, and for interlinkages. There is also a growing awareness that it is more effective to think of long-term solutions to conflicts of all kinds, from an interlinked approach.

Conflicts and needs for conflict prevention and management remains the pressing challenge of the ECOWAS and ECCAS subregions, including the Sahel. These conflicts are assuming different dimensions, with environmental induced, resource induced, ethno-political and transboundary dimensions. Very important is the fact that these conflicts play significant contributory roles in the general atmosphere of human security in the west and central African subregions. Exploring the prospects of multi-layered solutions, does not only address the predominant challenge of conflict or threat to peace and security, but humanitarian distress is also reduced, the affected

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[3] UN ECA, Final Report Virtual Inception Meeting for the Subregional Studies on the Interlinkages between the Development, Peace and Security, Human Rights and Humanitarian Pillars Addis Ababa, 27 October 2020

states/regions are not left out of the path of development, that pays attention to human rights and rule of law.

The research was not set out as a purely academic exercise, but more of an anecdotalistic rendition of observations and reports garnered from surveys, key informant interviews and literatures, in such a way that makes for practical extension of the findings and recommendations. Far reaching reforms in governance and leadership to ensure transformative, visionary and transparent governments and government institutions, rule of law, subregional cooperation in addressing common challenges and the adoption of flexible approaches to the interlinkages are some way forward in driving the interlinkages in the west and central Africa sub-regions.

2. BACKGROUND/INTRODUCTION

This is a study on the interlinkages among development, peace and security, human rights and humanitarian pillars for the Sahel, west and central Africa subregions. The study also covers the Regional Economic Commissions (RECs) respectively known as Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS) and CENSAD, Transboundary initiatives such as the SAHEL initiative and the Green Wall initiative are considered along with relevant Intergovernmental Organizations (IGOs). Whilst providing a balanced overview of the four pillars, the study pays special attention to extrapolating the dynamic role of conflicts and the imperatives of conflict prevention and management and the four-pillar interlinkages.

Operationalizing the outcome of the study would promote collaborative, complementary and joined-up approaches in the implementation of interventions addressing development, peace and security, human rights and humanitarian challenges in the subregions. This is in line with the search for inclusive and sustainable solutions to conflicts, insecurities and other threats to humanity in the subregions.

The study also examined the situational impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, the youth and gender questions in the west and central African subregions on the four pillar interlinkages. This paves way for an examination of transboundary issues related to the study with a view to promoting intraregional cooperation for sustainable and lasting solutions to conflicts as well as key capacities development, as they pertain to mainstreaming the interlinkages into policies and strategies, including those related to Agenda 2063 and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

The dual resolutions passed by the General Assembly and the Security Council in April 2016, (Resolutions 70/262 and 2282) recognized the imperatives of coherence and complementarity between the UN's peace and security efforts and its development, human rights, and humanitarian work[4]. This was followed by strong joint commitments shared by the United Nation Secretary General and the African Union Commission Chairperson towards working together for the implementation of Agenda 2063 and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, with the recognition of the interlinkages between development, peace and security, human rights and humanitarianism. This commitment is equally demonstrated by the follow up effects of the following strategic documents:

- The Joint United Nations-African Union Framework for Enhanced Partnership in Peace and Security (the Peace and Security Framework)
- The African Union-United Nations Framework for the Implementation of Agenda 2063 and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (the Development Framework).
- The soon to be signed Joint Human Rights Framework.
- The MoU between the UN and the AUC on Humanitarian Action.

The study adds up into a collaborative continental assessment of the interlinkages of the four pillars, in Western and Central Africa, Eastern, Southern, as well as North Africa. The outcome of this study from the Western, Central Africa and the Sahel, will ultimately be relevant at the regional

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[4] UN ECA, Draft Report, virtual Inception Meeting on Subregional Studies on the Interlinkages between the Development, Peace and Security, Human Rights and Humanitarian Pillars. 27 October, 2020

and continental levels. It would highlight the specific realities in the sub-regions; and support the larger and longer-term objective of promoting the integrated implementation of Agenda 2063 and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, taking into account the AU-UN cooperation frameworks. It will contribute to the development of capacities of member States, African Union organs and agencies, including Regional Economic Communities (RECs). The report would also be supportive on a coordinated study that has been commissioned by the OSAA[5]

The framework of Programme 9 of Section 11 establishes the basis for the ECA and OSAA partnerships relevance for the entire study. The United Nations Office to the African Union (UNOAU), the Office of the High Commissioner on Human Rights (OHCHR) and the United Nations Office on the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UNOCHA) are important collaborators in the process. The ECA commissioned studies are primarily targeted at the eight African Union recognized Regional Economic Communities (RECs), Member States of the RECs, the AUC, AUDA-NEPAD and APRM.


[5] Discussions from pre-inception report meeting

1. **ANALYTICAL FRAMEWORK**

The depiction of conflict in the centre is deliberate to raise both negative and positive questions on the interlinkages. It is negative, as it shows the reality of prevalence of conflicts, including violent and non-violent, with the challenges posed by bad governance/leadership and ineffective institutions as affecting each of the pillars in the subregions. Conflict is also applied in a positive light, through prevention and resolution of conflicts, exploring good governance and effective institutions with the leverage of the linkages of the four pillars.

Effective and lasting solutions to conflicts, would promote human security and make for utmost freedom, described as larger freedom in the preamble of the aim of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

The nature of interactions between each pillar and conflict, and the joined-up relations between the four pillars and conflict would also be analyzed as indicated by the arrows in the diagram below.

FOUR-PILLAR INTERLINKAGES & CONFLICT
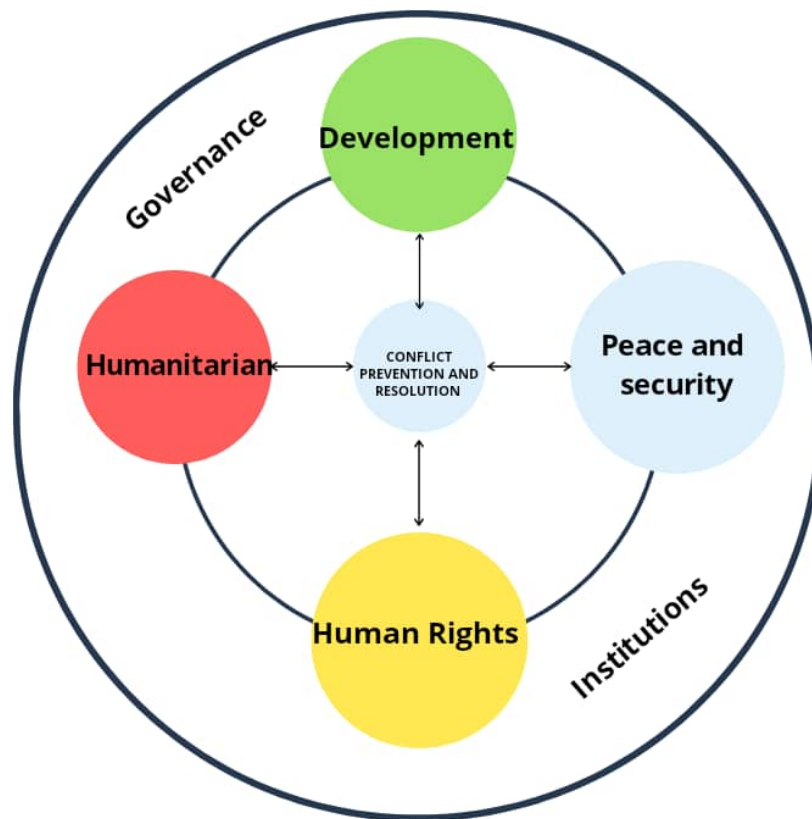
The Issues:

The specific issues covered in the study were guided by the situational analysis in the subregions and the AU-UN cooperation frameworks within the framework of Agenda 2063 and the 2030 SDGs Agenda. These include:

Nature of interlinkages between the various pillars, and why they are important for the Sahel, West and Central African subregions and specifically selected case study countries.

Human Rights realities
• Intimidation and repression of citizens
• Threats to rights of peaceful assembly
• Threats to housing rights
• Sexual and gender-based rights abuse
• Threats to religious and political freedoms, etc

Peace and Security
• Political and electoral systems
• Terrorism
• Natural resource explorations related issues
• Economic issues, sources of livelihoods (cattle herding, a major issue permeating Nigeria, Mali, Burkina Faso, Chad and Niger),
• Exploitation of ethnic differences, etc

Humanitarian realities

• Governance/Political interests
• Gender and youth issues such as inequality and violence increasingly growing complicated by the pandemic
• Disaster risks reduction
• Resilience
• Food security
• Migrations: Refugees/Internally displaced persons
• Natural and man-made disasters, including climate and environmental factors, etc.

Development realities
• Comprehensive measures of Human Development
• (a) Longevity (long lasting healthy lives)
• (b) Knowledge
• (c) Access to resources for a qualitative level of living
• (d) Role of the private sector and investment in development, through inclusive and innovative economic growth.

Critical and overarching factors that affect the interlinkages of the pillars. And how do they reflect opportunities and challenges for the interlinkages?

Governance: The exercise of authoritative decisions in the management of a country's affairs is very important for the realization of progressive change. This is very much the case in positively actualizing the interlinkages within the four pillars of concern. The AUC, through its African Governance Architecture (AGA) as well as the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM) arrangement constantly emphasize the importance of governance. The ECOWAS policy framework for security sector reform and governance, touches on the pillars. Also, the broad definition of OSAA's work as part of the UN's partnership with the AU on the peace-security-development relationship, underscores the interconnections between peace/security, development, governance and human rights as crucial for the achievement of inclusive and sustainable development in Africa.[6] Governance at the member states level would determine the outcome of the AU Agenda 2063 and the SDGs. The following are strong points in governance that are worthy of consideration for the purposes of this and other studies:

1.Visionary leadership and/or deficit thereof to collaborate in addressing challenges emanating from the pillars within member states. Weak governance and its impact on state institutions, including insufficient border management, have dramatically diminished the capacity of the Sahelian states to effectively deliver basic services, promote broad based political participation and protect human rights.[7] Widespread corruption, coupled with the inability of states to deliver basic services such as effective policing, justice, access to water, affordable health care and education, have resulted in the widening of gaps in state-society relations. At the same time, chronic political instability, evident in recurrent unconstitutional changes of government, absence of, or weak democratic/public participatory governance, violent electoral processes and social conflicts, is a direct result of lack of institutionalized political dialogue, weak parliaments and contested judicial systems[8].

2. Corruption in its multifaceted forms[9] hampers best strategies for pillar deliverables, nature of corporate governance, including capacity for transparency and accountability, to promote the efficient use of natural, financial and human resources. The African Union Convention on Preventing and Combating Corruption[10], the United Nations Convention Against Corruption[11], are key documents that illustrate the importance of handling corruption as an issue in governance. The ECA has also undertaken a number of studies on Illicit Financial Flows from Africa, as a major challenge affecting development.

3. Manipulation of primordial and religious associations leading to deficiencies in socio-political cohesion are of concern for governance. This has accounted for tensions and conflicts resulting from tribalism, ethnicity and religious differences amongst groups in the West and Central African

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[6] OSAA, Peace, Security and Development. https://www.un.org/en/africa/osaa/peace/
[7] United Nations Development Programme. Background of the role of the role of West and Central Africa
[8] United Nations Security Council, Report of the Secretary-General on the situation in the Sahel region. 14 June, 2013
[9] Babafemi Badejo, Towards Abhorrence for Corruption in a New Nigeria. Presented at the Magodo Associates Symposium "Nigeria which way Forward?" May 3, 2018. Available at https://www.slideshare.net/mobile/DavidAkinWilliams/corruption-abhorrence-by-prof-babafemi-badejo
Describes the forms and levels of corruption
[10] African Union Convention on Preventing and Combating Corruption. Adopted on July 1, 2003
[11] UNODC, United Nations Convention against Corruption. Signed on December 9, 2003.

subregions. Bad governance, operated on nepotic and clannish interests, directly affects progress on the positive operationalization and realization of the synergistic potentials of the four pillars.

Critical Resources and financing as a force in governance
1.   Internal availability/unavailability of marketable material resources as affecting policy choices.
2.   Internal availability/unavailability of human resources as affecting policy choices.
3.   Possibilities of realizing favorable external financing assistance that could enhance the realization of the inherent potentials of the interlinkages of the four pillars.

External Dynamics as a strong influence on governance
1.   International terror franchises have impacts on the interlinked four pillars. Boko Haram fully operational in Nigeria, Niger, Chad, Cameroon. The Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL), Islamic State West Africa Province (ISWAP), Al-Qa'ida with affiliates such as Al-qa'ida in the Maghreb (AQIM) are very strong in West Africa. The Lords Resistance Army holds sway in Central Africa beyond its original base in Uganda. These external influence from terrorist groups destabilize peace and security, violate human rights, distorts popular resilience, creating untold humanitarian problems and pose great economic and security challenges that stifles efforts geared towards development.

2.   Collective impact of strategic foreign influence and control, vestiges of colonial power relationships that persists, dependency and interdependency in the context of international economic relations are all relevant factors in examining and seeking to use the four-pillar interlinkages effectively in West and Central Africa. There is the need to look at the realities of states in the West and Central Africa from the lens of obvious strategic economic and political interests from without the subregions and how they affect the expected synergistic outcomes from operationalizing the four-pillar interlinkages.

Institutions
1.   Presence/absence of viable institutions for ownership and collaboration with stakeholders
a.   Public institutions: a constant review of public institutions as to how to continue to get them to function appropriately for the common good is crucial for the overall performance of the four-pillar interlinkages as an approach for the amelioration of conflict and ensuring the optimization of the potentials of the four-pillar interlinkages. Foremost but not limited on this are the executive, including security arrangements; the legislature; judiciary and political party systems with political parties being the Western models preferred basis for the recruitment of leadership.
b.   Private institutions: The link between good corporate governance and development is premised on the need to balance economic, social and environmental factors. Adherence to these principles also boosts investor and private sector confidence.
c.   Social institutions, religious and CSOs: Social institutions along the lines of religious organizations and CSOs working in different areas of focus are very important in West and Central Africa. Religious organizations hold so much influence. CSOs play a great role in building accountability and responsive governance. Article 3 of the Statutes of the Economic, Social and

Cultural Council of the African Union (ECOSOCC)[12] defines the CSOs to include but not limited to the following:

a. Social groups such as those representing women, children, the youth, the elderly and people with disability and special needs;

b. Professional groups such as associations of artists, engineers, health practitioners, social scientists, academia, business organizations, national chambers of commerce, workers, employers, industry and agriculture as well as other private sector interest groups;

c. Non-governmental organizations (NGOs), community-based organizations (CBOs) and voluntary organizations;

d. Cultural organizations

Case Studies

The study will avail a robust report on the situation of peace and security, development, human rights and humanitarian action and their interlinkages, and the state of play considering theoretical and operational levels and how interlinkages are harnessed to tackle conflict situations for sustainable and lasting solutions. The effort will include case studies of carefully selected countries of Mali, Nigeria, Cameroon and Central African Republic. Mali is both in West Africa and the Sahel. It has been in a situation of tension, active conflicts, military rule with spasmodic periods of civil governance. It is also affected by transboundary issues of terrorism and organized crime. Nigeria is a clear case of failure on all four pillars in spite of abundance of human and material resources. It would be interesting to explore the challenges of the interlinkages of the pillars with the case of Nigeria. Cameroon faces a problem of national integration that has resulted in problems of all the pillars. The CAR has also been in and out of coups, one conflict or the other facing challenges with respect to all the pillars.

1.1. Justification of the Study

The study is especially expedient given the lack of sufficient understanding, and application in theory and policy of the four-pillar interlinkages. Highlighting the relevance or rationale for interlinkages is also very important. Proper application of the four pillars would not only foster an integrative operational process, reduce situations of conflict and threats to good life, but also contribute meaningfully to the achievements of development goals embodied in Agenda 2063 and the SDGs. However, it must be noted from the onset that interlinkages analysis should be seen as work in progress. Aside from opportunities, there are many challenges, which the present study addresses.

1.2. Objectives of the Study

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[12] African Union, Statutes of the Economic, Social and Cultural Council of the African Union. Article 3. P.4

Aim and Objectives of the study

The primary aim of the study is to produce a robust report that explore critically the interlinkages of the four pillars of peace/security, development, human rights and humanitarianism in the Sahel, West and Central Africa subregions. The aim is to promote synergistic and integrated implementation of interventions addressing development, peace and security, human rights and humanitarian in the subregions. The study is expected to contribute to efficient management of conflicts in the two subregions.

Specific objectives of the study include

- Present a clear picture of the subregional realities/situation, with regards to the challenges in achieving peace/security, development, human rights and humanitarianism as they relate to conflict situations in the two subregions, and the expedient need for tinkering on new ways of doing things.
- General analysis of the interlinkages on the basis of the above on West and Central Africa, so as to show the extent of key-in and awareness or operational inclinations towards the importance of the interlinkages of the four pillars for policy-making and operational efforts in the search for solutions to conflict prevention and resolution at the doctrinal/practice and literature levels.
- Present the results and analysis at the country focused/case study level, subregional and AU level.
- Assess how the four pillar interlinkages framework could be used to foster synergistic implementation of interventions pertaining to the four pillars for sustainable and lasting solutions to conflicts, in the Sahel and in the West and Central Africa regions. This will include key issues, challenges and opportunities that exist on benefiting from synergies on the interlinkages of development, peace and security, human rights, and humanitarian pillars with respect to achieving concrete results taking into account situational foundation dimensions such as governance and institutions.
- The research will provide cross-sectoral analysis to form a basis for policy and operational decisions that are relevant to local communities and governments, as well as national governments and their partners such as RECs as well.
- Show the import of situational factors: governance and institutions to optimal operational efforts by aid agencies and other do-gooders.
- Demonstrate the effects of pandemics like the COVID-19 on the interlinkages. The COVID-19 is also used to show the connections in problems and opportunities amongst the four pillars.
- Transboundary issues to inform intraregional cooperation in finding sustainable and lasting solutions to conflicts.
- Mainstream gender and youth dimensions
- On the basis of the study's findings, advance appropriate and robust action-oriented recommendations on all elements of the study objectives

1.3.Methodology

The study will adopt an analytic approach using literature review of several UN, AU, RECs documents as well as academic studies. The analysis will be guided by the four pillar interlinkages framework. Additional efforts in the analysis will be buoyed by four case studies from the two subregions. Mali, a country with modest resources and development, that has been in out of conflicts and coup d'etats and in the Sahel provides a great representative choice when coupled with Nigeria with a lot more resources but equally in conflicts of different types. Cameroon and CAR would be looked at closely in Central Africa. In the former, a long serving leadership has not prevented conflicts, including cross-border spill-over of the Boko-Haram terror that has allegiance with an international terror franchise. Similarly, the CAR has been very turbulent for a while and provides a great opportunity for a study on interlinkages. All the four cases have problems on development as well as human rights and are dealing with humanitarian problems arising from conflicts within and from without their territories. In effect, the four case studies provide rich data for the analysis of the four-pillar interlinkages as they relate to the conflict situation in the two subregions.

The research process will also include statistical analysis using survey method and qualitative online interviews where possible. For the survey, the study will adopt cross-sectional research design which is descriptive in Nature. The assumption is that it is the most appropriate design for this study. In terms of data collection, the study will employ a mix/complementary method of data collection, using quantitative and qualitative methods of data collection. Using the two enriches the quality of data collected and further enhances the quality of the final report.

Instruments of data collection

The quantitative data was collected through using questionnaire designed for different stakeholders at national and collated as necessary at subregional levels.

A. **Questionnaire:** The questionnaire comprised six (6) sections:
1. Demographics: Country, age, gender, level of educational attainment.
2. Peace and security: In this section, the study participants were asked about how they perceive peace and security in their state and country, they were required to rate the level of peace and security on a scale. Participants were also asked to outline the peculiar threats to peace, security and development in their state, country and region as well as on whether these threats are being addressed and consideration on the challenges in addressing these threats to peace and security. Forms of violent crimes and insecurity peculiar to participants' state, country and region were also to be ascertained. Factors underlying threats to peace and insecurity were also to be examined. Effects of lack of peace and security on human rights, development and on humanitarianism were also at focus in this section. Peculiar and particular threats to participants' livelihoods and survivals were also programmed for ascertainment.
3. Human rights: In this section, participants were asked questions relating to human rights in their state, country and region, if they thought that their rights were being abused in their state, country and region. Are there legal framework in your state, country or region protecting human rights abuses, how effective are the legal framework(s) in protecting people against human rights abuses. Effects of human rights on peace and security, humanitarian and development in general will be ascertained in this section etc.

4. <u>Humanitarian:</u> This section focused on humanitarians in participant's states, countries and regions. Participants were requested to outline various humanitarians available in their state, country and region, types of humanitarian support deliverers, are they local or international, donor agencies. Correlation between humanitarian gestures and development, do they perceive any hidden agenda from funders and donors? Effects of lack of humanitarians to their state, country, region and Africa at large. How can humanitarian support be effectively utilized for growth and development of Africa etc.
5. <u>Development:</u> In this section, participants were asked to outline factors hindering the development of their state, country, region and Africa at large. The role of violent crimes and insecurity on the development of their country, region and Africa at large were sought. How has human right abuses stalled and hindered development in their country and region etc?
6. <u>Interlink between the four pillar interlinkages:</u> This last section focused on the interlinkages between peace and security, human rights, humanitarian and development pillars.
7. <u>Role of the interlinkages (how could they be harnessed) in the search for solutions to avert conflict situations</u>

B. **Key Informant interviews (KII):** The key informant interviews were qualitative unstructured exchanges with senior practitioners of the ECOWAS and ECCAS as well as other intergovernmental organizations, including AUC.

Data collection and distribution of questionnaires, conducting interviews

In spite of the best efforts of the ECA/SRO West/Central Africa the filled questionnaire totaled 201 Anglophone responses and 49 Francophone responses.

Data analysis

The quantitative data was analyzed using Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS, Version 24). The data was analyzed using frequency and percentages, pie charts, histogram, and bar charts to represent the data across countries and regions. Mean, standard deviation, chi-square was used to compare and contrast data amongst countries. The data analyzed, enriched the production of this report, including recommendations.

2. FOUR PILLAR INTERLINKAGES

Conceptualizing the Interlinkages of development, peace/security, human rights and humanitarian pillars

The Interlinkages approach is to strengthen collaboration, coherence and complementarity. Interlinkages as an approach seeks to maximize the comparative advantages of each pillar in order to reduce overall vulnerability and the number of unmet needs. It also strengthens risk management capacities and address root causes of conflict[13]

Joined-up or complementarity approaches refers to the coherent and collaborative coordination, programming and financing of humanitarian, development and peace actions based on shared risk-informed and gender sensitive analysis; while ensuring that humanitarian action always remains needs-based and principled[14]

The study proposes a "Four Pillar Interlinkages" framework to adequately capture the concerns of the Terms of Reference (ToR), under the situational foundation of governance and institutions as part of the framework. The intention is to address conflict situations in the two subregions. Preliminary review of the literature shows some conceptual inconsistencies on the application of the more popular concept of 'triple nexus'. It is often applied with different focus. Some triple nexus analysis focus on Human Rights-Development-Peace/security[15], others emphasise the Humanitarian-Development-Peace/Security as the triple nexus. For example, the study commissioned by the Office of Special Adviser on Africa (OSAA) for the Expert Group Meeting on December 9 and 10, 2019, and other similar documents focused on peace, development and humanitarian nexus[16] with the term nexus used in referring to the interlinkages of pillars[17]:

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[13] OECD, DAC Recommendation on the Humanitarian-Development-Peace Nexus, OECD/LEGAL/5019

[14] Ibid.

[15] Paul J. Nelson and Ellen Dorsey, "At the Nexus of Human Rights and Development: New Methods and Strategies of Global NGOs", in *World Development*, Vol 31, Issue 12, December 2003. Pp 2013.
Available on ScienceDirect at https://doi.org/10.1016/j.worlddev.2003.06.009
Riva Kantowitz, Advancing the Nexus of Human Rights and Peacebuilding, in development dialogue paper, no.27 February,2020. Riva Kantowitz discusses how human rights, sustaining peace and sustainable development share a number of foundational concepts and values.
Available at: https://www.daghammarskjold.se/publication/advancing-the-nexus-of-human-rights-and-peacebuilding/

[16] The "triple nexus" often refers to the interlinkages between humanitarian, development and peace actors. In line with the UN's "New Way of Working (NWoW)," following the findings from the 2016 World Humanitarian Summits and the enunciation of the Agenda 2063.
See also Executive Summary of the study by Cyril Obi, Study on Strengthening and Mainstreaming the Peace, Development and Humanitarian Nexus into Policies and Strategies in Africa.
Also, the report of Office of Special Adviser on Africa (OSAA) Expert Group Meeting (EGM) "The role of advocacy and research in breaking the silos: strengthening the nexus approach in Africa" 10-11 December 2019. New York, UN Secretariat.

[17] Documents and frameworks have established the relevance of the nexus. The World Humanitarian Summit 2016, Issue Paper May 2016,
Also, High-Level Panel on Humanitarian Financing Report to the Secretary-General: Too important to fail - addressing the humanitarian financing gap. January 2016.
Guterres, A., 2016. Secretary-General-designate António Guterres' remarks to the General Assembly on taking the oath of office Secretary-General. United Nations. Available at:

development[18], peace and security[19], human rights[20] and humanitarian[21]. The increased pressures on limited global resources due to escalating levels of conflict and crises, in concert with the search for integrative, holistic and sustainable approaches for managing and responding to crises and the aftermaths made more relevant, the application of the three pillar interlinkages[22]. Actors in the humanitarian and development sectors since the 1980s have attempted to deploy a nexus approach linking Relief, Rehabilitation and Development (LRRD), and Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) to provide relief to or build resilience in fragile or disaster-affected contexts[23].

5.1 Conceptualization and Application of each Pillar

Development Pillar

The concept of development is very broad. The emphasis here aligns with the African Governance Report (AGR) 2019, on the aspects that are focused on by the AU Agenda Aspirations 1, 3, 4 and 6, and the (global) UN 2030 Agenda for SDG 16[24]. The SDGs, Agenda 2063, the AU-UN Development Framework, the UNDP Human Development index, are key documents driving development for Africa especially from an interlinked point of view.

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https://www.un.org/sg/en/content/sg/speeches/2016-12-12/secretary-generaldesignate-antónio-guterres-oath-office-speech [Accessed September 12, 2020].

The New Way of Working (NWoW) as outlined in the Secretary-General's Report of the WHS Available at https://www.agendaforhumanity.org/sites/default/files/A-71-353%20-%20SG%20Report%20on%20the%20Outcome%20of%20the%20WHS.pdf

Agenda for Humanity. Available at http://www.agendaforhumanity.org/sites/default/files/resources/2017/Jul/AgendaforHumanity.pdf

[18] AU-UN Development Framework

[19] Preventing and Mediating Conflict and Sustaining Peace; NEPAD, Post Conflict Reconstruction Policy; UN-AU Peace and Security Framework

[20] The 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) and the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights, *(Adopted 27 June 1981, OAU Doc. CAB/LEG/67/3 rev. 5, 21 I.L.M. 58 (1982), entered into force 21 October 1986*)

[21] See Babafemi Adesina Badejo, "A study on the modalities for the operationalization of the African Humanitarian Agency", submitted to the department of Political Affairs, the African Union Commission, June 1, 2020.
An earlier draft is available at: https://au.int/en/newsevents/20200520/african-humanitarian-agency-afha-member-states-and-recs-validation-meeting

[22]Cyril Obi, Study on Strengthening and Mainstreaming the Peace, Development and Humanitarian Nexus into Policies and Strategies in Africa, p. 3. He used nexus though we are using pillar interlinkages in this study.

[23] See Cyril Obi, Study on Strengthening and Mainstreaming the Peace, Development and Humanitarian Nexus into Policies and Strategies in Africa

[24] UN 2030 Agenda for SDGs: SDG 16: Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels, and AU Vision 2063. Aspiration 1: A prosperous Africa based on inclusive growth and sustainable development; Aspiration 3: An Africa of good governance, democracy, respect for human rights, justice and the rule of law; and Aspiration 4: A peaceful and secure Africa.

The approach is similar at RECs levels. For instance, in 2007, the ECOWAS adopted a 2020 Vision whose slogan was the transition from ECOWAS of States to ECOWAS of peoples.[25] In order to achieve this, a long-term regional development strategy was defined, one of the major instruments of which was the Community Development Program (PCD). A Regional Strategic Plan (PSR 2011-2015) and a Community Strategic Framework (CSC 2016-2020) have also been implemented in order to integrate the programs of the institutions and agencies of the Region as well from an interlinked lens.[26]The vision was implemented successively through the PSR (2011-2015) and the CSC (2016-2020). From the evaluation of the implementation of the ESP, an average annual physical execution rate of 36.8% emerges during the period 2011-2015 (CEA-ECOWAS 2020: Evaluation Report of the 2020 vision, Provisional report).[27]

At ECOWAS and ECCAS level, development in this context, is seen from a broader lens, cutting across economic growth indicators, per capita income, GDP, standard of living, quality of life, life expectancy, human capacity, resource optimization, private sector inclusion, fiscal stability; access to basic social services and poverty alleviation; democracy, human rights and civil liberties; reasonable level of security; and good governance virtues (accountability, transparency, etc.).[28] In other words, development (human development and/or human security) that is sustainable is one that seeks to optimize performance of the other pillars.

Sustainable development cannot be realized without peace and security; and peace and security will be at risk without sustainable development. The new Agenda recognizes the need to build peaceful, just and inclusive societies that provide equal access to justice and that are based on respect for human rights (including the right to development), on effective rule of law and good governance at all levels and on transparent, effective and accountable institutions[29] Development is also considered as a conflict prevention mechanism. Through equitable and sustainable development, security is enhanced, directly serving as a conflict prevention instrument

The thrust of the work of OSAA in the areas of peace, security and development, further underscores the fact that there is no peace without development, there is no development without peace and there is no peace and development without human rights. The absence or deficiency in the pillars of peace/security, human rights, and development, leads to humanitarian crisis.[30] Humanitarian interventions towards building resilience interlinks with development, averts tensions and conflicts hence ensuring respect for human rights.

The Sahel Alliance was also set up in 2017 by France, Germany and the EU to improve the effectiveness of development assistance in the area, and serve as a contact point for G5 on development issues. It coordinates the activities of major development partners in the region, so as to speed up the implementation of development actions which addresses the needs of the populations, such as economic empowerment and job creation for youth, education and training,

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[25] From an ECOWAS of States to an ECOWAS of Peoples. www.ecowas.int
[26] Fourth Meeting of the Forum of Stakeholders on ECOWAS. Wai-iao.ecowas.int
[27] www.ecowas.int.
[28] See Amartya Sen, Development as Freedom, pp. 13-34.
[29] Para 35, United Nations, Transforming Our World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. A/RES/70/1
[30] In the study we will link the work of OSAA (Subprogramme 1) with that of ECA (Subprogramme 2) within the framework of Programme 9 (UN Support to the NEPAD Programme of the AU).

agriculture, rural development and food security, energy and climate, governance, support for rolling out basic services and internal security[31]

The interlinkages have relevance towards the promotion of synergistic and integrated implementation of interventions addressing peace and security, human rights, humanitarian and development situations in the subregions. They contribute to efficient and lasting solutions to conflict in the subregions. Development is also considered as a conflict prevention mechanism. Through equitable and sustainable development security is enhanced, directly serving as a conflict prevention instrument.

Peace and Security Pillar

The conceptualization and practical operationalization of Peace and Security by key policy frameworks and documents such as *the UN-AU Peace and Security Framework*, the AU's Protocol Relating to the Establishment of the Peace and Security Council, *and the related Peace and Security Architecture, The ECOWAS Conflict Prevention Framework,(ECPF) The ECOWAS Peace and Security Architecture, The Central African early-warning system, and The Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS) Peace and Security Architecture,* the United Nations Integrated Strategy for the Sahel, The African Governance Architecture, the APRM and of course the AU Agenda 2063 and the RECs, all clearly show the interlinkages between peace/security and the three other pillars of human rights, development and humanitarianism, and further stresses the need for collaborative efforts on the four pillars.

The overarching concern for peace and security as it relates with the other three pillars of concern in this study is very evident in the AU's Protocol Relating to the Establishment of the Peace and Security Council, and the related Peace and Security Architecture. Article 3 of the AU Peace and Security Protocol has six objectives that promote joined up approaches[32] as follows:

(a) promote peace, security and stability in Africa, in order to guarantee the protection and preservation of life and property, the well-being of the African people and their environment, as well as the creation of conditions conducive to sustainable development;

(b) anticipate and prevent conflicts. In circumstances where conflicts have occurred, the Peace and Security Council shall have the responsibility to undertake peace-making and peace building functions for the resolution of these conflicts;

(c) promote and implement peace-building and post-conflict reconstruction activities to consolidate peace and prevent the resurgence of violence;

(d) co-ordinate and harmonize continental efforts in the prevention and combating of international terrorism in all its aspects;

(e) develop a common defence policy for the Union, in accordance with article 4(d) of the Constitutive Act;

(f) promote and encourage democratic practices, good governance and the rule of law, protect human rights and fundamental freedoms, respect for the sanctity of human life and international humanitarian law, as part of efforts for preventing conflicts.

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[31] France Diplomacy, G5 Sahel Joint Force and the Sahel Alliance.
[32] Protocol Relating to the Establishment of the Peace and Security Council of the African Union

In a similar vein, the ECOWAS Conflict Prevention Framework, (ECPF) clearly outlines programs, objectives, activities and stakeholders for implementing the ECOWAS Protocols on peace and security with focus on conflict prevention, human security and peace building[33]. The ECPF also calls for broader stakeholders' participation in its implementation. In addition, the ECPF has some provisions addressing women, security and peace, as well as youth empowerment, which the study would benefit from. The ECPF, adopted in January 2008, pursues human security as a broader context for achieving peace and security. It seeks "a comprehensive operational conflict-prevention and peacebuilding strategy". It identified 14-15 very ambitious components, including early warning, preventive diplomacy and a peacekeeping force, cross-border initiatives, the promotion of the interests of youth and women, of peace and security, or good governance of natural resources.[34]

The United Nations integrated strategy for the Sahel region, also share an integrative approach through its goals: inclusive and effective governance, national and regional security mechanisms for addressing cross-border threats, humanitarian and development plans and interventions for long-term resilience.

Countries in the Sahel are vulnerable to insecurity resulting from armed conflict, terrorist activities, illicit trafficking and organized crimes, profound humanitarian issues as recurring food and nutritional crises caused by climate change, environmental degradation, drought, floods, poorly functioning markets, low agricultural productivity, poverty and conflict. These and other critical challenges require long-term regional approach especially the interlinkages of the four pillars in building resilience.

According to the ECOWAS policy framework for security sector reform and governance, security covers both the traditional state-centric notion of the survival of the state and its protection from external and internal aggression by military means, as well as well as the non-military notion of human security based on political, economic, social and environmental imperatives in addition to human rights.

Through these frameworks, the ECOWAS has made some significant contributions to the promotion of peace and security in Cote d'Ivoire, Guinea Bissau, Liberia, and Sierra Leone. The ECOWAS preventive diplomacy initiatives also averted large scale violence in Niger, Guinea and Togo[35]

However, certain threats to peace and security in the region have persisted. In the Lake Chad Basin, attacks by Boko Haram group continue to threaten peace, security and stability in the region. The SRSG of the region, Ibn Chambas has called for an "enhanced support to the implementation of

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[33] The ECOWAS Conflict Prevention Framework (ECPF) REGULATION MSC/REG.1/01/08
[34] The fourteen components are: 1) early warning 2) preventive diplomacy 3) democracy and political governance 4) human rights and the rule of law 5) media 6) natural resources governance 7) cross-border initiatives 8) security governance 9) practical disarmament 10) women, peace and security 11) youth empowerment 12) ECOWAS Standby Force 13) humanitarian assistance 14) peace education (the culture of peace).
[35] Geneva Centre for Security Sector Governance, Implementing the ECOWAS Conflict Prevention Framework: Prospects and Challenges

the Regional Stabilization Strategy for the Lake Chad Basin as well as the Priority Investment Program of the Group of Five of the Sahel, along with a concerted effort to support national development plans" to boost the development of the region"[36]. This clearly shows the interlinkages that peace and security shares with development.

The challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic threatens democracy, with the application of drastic, authoritarian, emergency measures which do not only endanger peace and security, but also prospects of human rights, humanitarianism and development in the subregions.

The continued deterioration of the security and humanitarian situation in the Sahel region necessitated sustained regional and international engagement to help the countries in the subregion to address the peace and security challenges like terrorism, maritime piracy, conflicts between pastoralists and farmers, transnationally organized crimes, human trafficking, arms and drug peddling, issues from poorly managed and/or illegal exploitation of natural resources. Fully integrated response, led by the collaboration of governments of countries in the subregion, support of UNWOWAS and the international community, encompassing simultaneous pursuit of progress on security, governance, humanitarian assistance and development is required. Rightfully responding to the question of development, humanitarian, human rights as well as peace and security in the subregion, the Security Council called for a more integrated and multisectoral approach[37].

"there is no development without peace, but there is also no peace without development"[38]
"inclusive and sustainable development not only is an end in itself but also happens to be the best defense against the risk of violent conflict" [39]

The G5 Sahel, a joint force to tackle security threats, focuses on three missions. These are to counter terrorism, organized cross-border crimes, climate change and human trafficking, in five Sahel states of Mauritania, Niger, Chad, Burkina Faso and Mali. This is a political, military and development IGO framework to addressing critical issues in State fragility in the Sahel. In the area of security, the G5 set up the G5 Sahel Joint Force in 2017[40]. The G5 Sahel have driven initiatives around infrastructural projects (roads, bridges, telephone services), access to resources and electrification, improvement of governance through women inclusion and justice.

The ECCAS subregion adopted the Protocol of Peace and Security in 1999 to deal with the conflict and political instability in the region. The protocol made way for the establishment of the Security Council, with three instruments, the Commission for Defense and Security, the Central African Early Warning System and the Central African Multinational Force.[41]

Peace and Security remains a key issue of concern in the CENSAD community. A lot of instability is endemic in the region. On jihadist activities, the region by virtue of its geographic location, is

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[36] UNOWAS, West Africa and the Sahel, Between Security challenges and the need to consolidate Peace" 3rd December, 2019
[37] Ibid.
[38] United Nations News, 'Peace is at risk and violated in many places, but we will not give up, says UN chief, Guterres.' https://news.un.org/en/story/2018/09/1020092 [Accessed September 24, 2020)
[39] Peacebuilding and Sustainable Peace, Report of the Secretary-General January 18, 2018
[40] France Diplomacy, G5 Sahel Joint Force and the Sahel Alliance.
[41] African Development Bank. ECCAS Regional Integration Assistance Strategy for Central Africa 2011-2015.

also exposed to a great turbulence of migration. The signing of the Security Charter by the CENSAD community in 2000 at N'djamena, Chad, which subsequently led to the Niamey Declaration on Conflict Prevention and Peaceful Settlement of Disputes, all show the place of strong political resolution.

Addressing issues as armed conflicts and violent clashes, activities of militias and violent non-state actors, attacks on civilian populations, transboundary or transnational violence and attendant humanitarian consequences that at times fuel new conflicts, are very key in the pursuit of peace and security and the furtherance of human rights and development in the subregions.

Conflicts generally, have multiple causes and no single explanation can provide an all-encompassing explanatory factor. In other words, resource conflicts are intertwined with ethnic, religious, clan and regional conflicts. Accord's description of conflict related situations in Africa, along seven categories, will be useful in our analysis.

1. Stigmatization and discrimination
2. Issues of trust between citizens and institutions
3. Issues around livelihood and food security
4. Issues around domestic and gender-based violence
5. Crime related incidents
6. Political unrest and violence
7. Issues around cross border or inter-state tensions.[42]

According to the Institute for Economics and Peace[43], countries with higher levels of peace tend to be more resilient to external shocks, whether they are economic, geopolitical or natural disasters. This institute is the first to rank the nations of the world by their peacefulness on its Global Peace Index. Inaugurated in 2007, it ranks 162 nations by their "absence of violence" or absence of the "fear of violence". In measuring negative peace, the GPI uses 22 qualitative and quantitative indicators from highly respected sources, which encompasses three broad themes namely: the level of safety and security, the extent of domestic or international conflict and the degree of militarization. It is useful to understand the different types of violence and relative levels of violence between nations, but this in itself, does not foster our understanding of the maintenance of a peaceful society. Peace can be viewed from two angles: negative and positive peace. Unlike negative peace which refers to the absence of violence, positive peace defines the set of attitudes, institutions and structures which when strengthened, will lead to a more peaceful society.[44] And this results in cooperation for mutual benefit and a situation where individuals and society are in harmony[45].

The pillar of peace provides a framework for assessing according to the Institute, the positive peace factors that create peaceful societies. This forms an ideal base for measuring a society's

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[42] See Accord, Conflict and Resilience Monitor, 17th April, 2020.

[43] "Pillars of Peace: Understanding the key Attitudes and Institutions that Underpin Peaceful Societies" Available at http//www.economicsandpeace.org. Accessed 20/10/2020.

[44] Ibid.

[45] J. Gatlung, "Twenty five years of Peace Research: Ten Challenges and some Responses" Journal of Peace Research, 1985.

potential for peace. These positive peace factors can also be used to assess how supportive the underlying environment is towards development, as they are positively associated with developmental outcomes and therefore the fulfilment of human potential. These pillars of peace provide an ideal touchstone against which to measure the performance of the broader aspects of social development and a country's overall resilience when confronted with social upheavals. In constructing the pillar of peace, over 900 indices, datasets and attitudinal surveys were analyzed in conjunction with current thinking about what drives peace, resilience and conflict. The pillars are:

- A well-functioning government;
- A sound business environment;
- An equitable distribution of resources;
- An acceptance of the rights of others;
- Good relations with neighbors;
- Free flow of information;
- A high level of human capital; and
- Low levels of corruption.

Security in the most rounded understanding covers varying critical issues as individual security, collective/group security, national security (response to internal and external threats to security) social, political, economic, legal, judicial, food, financial, health humanitarian and environmental security.[46]

Security could also be seen as having a double edge, of military and non-military dimensions, with such functions as defense, maintenance of law and order, intelligence, management of threats and attacks against state security and peace. The conception of security as "human security" gives security a humanitarian and developmental dimension. Security also shares link with human rights as it relates with human rights core values like freedom, democracy and development.

The Human Development Report, 1994, first recognized the approach of human security. It stated that security is about people and less of territory, security is more of development and less of arms. Bringing a new paradigm of sustainable human development, with peace dividend.[47] Human security is also considered as freedom from fear and want. It also entails freedom from threats from disease, famine, unemployment, poverty, urban or sub-urban crime, terrorism, violation of human rights, environmental degradation, natural disasters or social, political, economic and cultural upheavals, resilience in managing all forms of natural and man-made disasters, management of transboundary crisis as well.

Kofi Annan, former UN Secretary General, considered the right to freedom from want, the right to freedom from fear and the right of future generations to inherit a healthy planet, as components of human security. What is clear is that human security cannot be achieved without the combination of the rule of law, the respect for democracy, the protection of human rights, good governance, environmental protection and peaceful resolution of conflicts.

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[46] Dr. Zeïni MOULAYE and IGP Mahamadou NIAKATE | Shared Governance of Peace and Security, The Malian Experience.
[47] UNDP. 1994. Human Development Report 1994: New Dimensions of Human Security. http://www.hdr.undp.org/en/content/human-development-report-1994

It is also important to understand that there are direct and indirect threats to human security[48].

Direct threats or violence could include:

Violent deaths/victims of violent crime, killing of women and children, terrorism, sexual abuse, genocides, war, etc

Dehumanization, slavery, trafficking, child soldiering, kidnapping, unlawful detention, discrimination, etc.

Indirect violence or threats include:

Deprivation of basic needs and infrastructures, natural and man-made disasters

Underdevelopment: Poor GNP growth, inflation, unemployment, inequalities, environmental degradation, etc.

The "African peace and security architecture" (APSA) of the AU, is a structure guiding the AU and other regional agencies in consolidating peacekeeping and security efforts on the continent. The structure includes: a policy-making body (the Peace and Security Council, PSC); a centre for analysis and data collection (the Continental Early Warning System, CEWS); two military structures (the African Standby Force, ASF, and the Military Staff Committee, MSC); an advisory body of outside mediation (the Panel of the Wise); and a special fund to finance the operations (the Peace Fund)[49].

The Peace and Security Council (PSC) and the **African Standby Force** (ASF) are two of the major instruments of the African Peace and Security Architecture (APSA). The PSC is more of a "decision-making body for conflict prevention, management and resolution". The main objectives the PSC are:

- Promoting peace, security and stability in Africa;
- The prevention of conflicts;
- Promoting the activities of peacebuilding and post-conflict reconstruction;
- The coordination of efforts to fight terrorism;
- The development of a common defense policy for the AU, and
- The strengthening of democratic practices, good governance, human rights or fundamental freedoms protection.

The African Standby Force (ASF) is to provide military intervention and rapid reaction force. Its mandate would provide for various functions in the area of support to peace operations (election observation and monitoring, supervision of the disarmament and demobilization, etc.)[50].

Human Rights Pillar

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[48] Kanti Bajpai, "Human Security: Concept and Measurement", University of Notre Dame, Kroc Institute Occasional Paper 19, August 2000.p.40

[49] Rafael Grasa and Oscar Mateos, ICIP WORKING PAPERS: 2010/08 Conflict, Peace and Security in Africa: an Assessment and New Questions After 50 Years of African Independence. Institut Català Internacional per la Pa Barcelona, December 2010. P.18

[50] Ibid.

There are key fundamental and/or foundational documents as well as operational frameworks that focuses on human rights and recognize its import within the four-pillar interlinkages. These include: The Universal Declaration of Human Rights, The *1981 African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights and its Protocol on the Rights of Women, the Draft UN-AU Human Rights Framework. The African Commission on Human and Peoples Rights, 2013,* The African Charter makes provision for key rights which when pursued would promote peace/security and development. Article 2 of the 1981 African Charter on human and Peoples' rights, clearly states that every individual shall be entitled to the enjoyment of the rights and freedoms recognized and guaranteed in the present charter without distinction of any kind such as race, ethnic group, colour, sex, language, religion, political or any other opinion, national and social origin, fortune, birth or any status. Article 8, very importantly, makes the case for freedom of conscience and religion. Article 13 stipulates the right to participation in governance, access to public services. Social and economic rights such as right to own property (Art. 14), right to work (Art. 15), right to enjoy physical and mental health (Art. 16), right to education and cultural life of a community (Art. 17) and right to economic, social and cultural development (Art. 22), equality of persons (Art. 19), right to life and integrity (Art. 4), right to liberty and security of persons (Art. 6), right to fair hearing (Art.7), freedom of association and free assembly (Art.10-11) etc.

The West and Central African subregions are rife with human rights issues revolving around the following
- Intimidation and repression of citizens
- Threats to rights of peaceful assembly
- Threats to housing rights
- Sexual and gender-based abuses
- Threats to religious and political freedoms, etc
- Abuses by security forces
- Humanitarian and refugee related human rights issues
- Issues with freedom of civil society and media
- Unlawful arbitrary killings, extra judicial killings
- Forced disappearances
- Unlawful infringement on citizens privacy rights
- Forced or bounded labour etc

Humanitarian Pillar

The MOU between the UN and AUC on Humanitarian Action, the 2009 AU Convention for the Protection and Assistance of Internally Displaced Persons in Africa[51], Humanitarian Policy Framework, A Study on the Modalities for the Operationalization of the African Union Humanitarian Agency, African Strategy for Disaster Reduction and the Programme of Action for the implementation of the Africa Regional Strategy for Disaster Risk Reduction (2006-2015) are some key policy documents on humanitarian line of action. They are meant to strengthen the

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[51] Adopted by the Special Summit of the AU held in Kampala, Uganda, on 22 October 2009. Entered into force on 6 December 2012

agelong resilience in the subregions. Humanitarian issues in the subregions generally include natural and man-made disasters with the latter being related to armed conflicts, political tensions and inter-group violence, leading to displacements dislocations and increased sufferings which, at times, result in fresh conflicts.

In looking at the progress and challenges that Africa faces in today's world and implications for Agenda 2063, the Framework Document[52] noted the high vulnerability of Africa to climate change in spite of its low contribution to the problem given its low level of industrialization. The document points out that the relatively low level of technological development of Africa renders it highly vulnerable to disasters especially "climate related or hydro-meteorological hazards, i.e., droughts, floods and windstorms. The document lists less frequent hazards as including: "pest infestation, earthquakes, landslides, wildfire and volcanic eruptions. More prevalent are diseases outbreaks, such as Ebola, that had left a trail of heavy destruction of both life and livelihoods for peoples in West and Central Africa[53]". Four broad categories of humanitarian crises have been identified in Africa. These are Geological; Hydro-meteorological; Biological and Conflicts[54].

The Humanitarian Assistance commitment of the ECPF seeks to [i] Mitigate the impact of humanitarian disasters and emergencies that could result in social and political upheaval; [ii] Serve as a bridge between relief/emergency assistance and medium term rehabilitation and reconstruction efforts in post-conflict and disaster settings; [iii] Protect sustainable development, including individual and community livelihoods, through effective crisis prevention and preparedness activities; and [iv] Foster interregional harmony and security through cooperative arrangements to ensure effective humanitarian crisis prevention and preparedness programs[55].

There are webs of interlinkages between humanitarian issues and the other pillars of this study: development, peace/security and human rights. For instance, a humanitarian burden may arise alongside human rights abuse, when state agencies embark on certain development projects. For example clearing off traders along the road side, taking off residence around swampy areas or residences too close to a river, or any other related situation posing a potential threat to safety of lives, could readily stir up an internally displaced persons (IDP) crisis, even without any form of violent conflicts. This can also amount to abuse of human rights if not well handled. Also, the interconnection of armed violence and insecurities; pandemics, drought, flood, famine and food insecurity and unemployment triggers challenges of peace/security, development, human rights and humanitarian crisis. The 1991 UN General Assembly (UNGA) Resolution 46/182 holds that the victims of natural disasters and man-made disasters are key targets of humanitarian assistance.[56] The resolution further underscores the relationships between emergency, rehabilitation and development (paragraph 9), as well as the links between economic growth,

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[52] *Agenda 2063: The Africa We Want: Framework Document,* "A shared strategic framework for inclusive growth and sustainable Development & a global strategy to optimize the use of Africa's Resources for the benefit of all Africans," September 2015, pp. 6971.

[53] Ibid.p.6971

[54] Babafemi Badejo, A study on the modalities for the operationalization of the African Humanitarian Agency, submitted to the department of Political Affairs, the African Union Commission, October 21, 2019. Available at: https://au.int/en/newsevents/20200520/african-humanitarian-agency-afha-member-states-and-recs-validation-meeting

[55] The ECOWAS Conflict Prevention Framework (ECPF) REGULATION MSC/REG.1/01/08

[56] See UNGA Res 46/182 (1991), https://undocs.org/A/RES/46/182

sustainable development and the prevention and preparedness against emergencies (paragraph 10)[57].

The importance of the humanitarian pillar is further evident in the empowering mandates of the AU as provided in the AU Constitutive Act and the Protocol establishing the Peace and Security Council. These foundational documents have influenced the AU Humanitarian Policy Framework and support the study on the operationalization of the African Union Humanitarian Agency (AUHA). The AUHA would operate under core humanitarian principles such as "humanity, impartiality, independence and neutrality; including principles of state responsibility, solidarity among Member States as a customary extension of hospitality, egalitarianism and solidarity with peoples in situations of need; and also lays emphasis on participation and ownership by the affected populations and host communities as a cornerstone of humanitarian action"[58]. The AU Humanitarian Policy Framework emphasizes early warning, preparedness and response, protection and assistance to victims and vulnerable groups, protection of civilians in armed conflicts, disaster management and risk reduction, inclusive peace process and post-conflict reconstruction and development as core priorities.[59]

In the West African subregion, displacements induced by years of conflicts and crisis, terrorist activities, crisis over poor management of resources, farmers-herders crisis, effects of pandemics, and very low level of development, continues to trigger humanitarian crisis. In fact, the West and Central Africa has been identified as having one of Africa's largest displaced populations[60]. The Central African Republic alone, is said to be home to the third largest humanitarian crisis in the world. The extremely poor level of infrastructural development continue to dampen humanitarian support, throwing millions into precarious humanitarian situations, further showing the interlinkages between development and humanitarianism. Insecurity is also a key factor driving displacement in Central African Republic. About 93% of displaced households have reportedly fled their areas of origin out of fear for their security[61]. In total, one-fifth of the population has had to flee their homes to survive the eruption of violence. Refugees from CAR are estimated at a total of 611,338 with nearly half fleeing to neighbouring Cameroon[62].

The Great Green Wall for Sahara and the Sahel Initiative (GGWSSI) launched in 2008, by the UN Convention to Combat Desertification, and the African Union, seeks to address humanitarian challenges, by reducing land degradation and desertification in the Sahel and Sahara as well as to boost food security and support local communities to adapt to the realities of climate change.

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[57] The inception report by Olawale Ismail for East Africa, pointed attention to this

[58] Babafemi Badejo, A study on the modalities for the operationalization of the African Humanitarian Agency, submitted to the department of Political Affairs, the African Union Commission, October 21, 2019.
Available at: https://au.int/en/newsevents/20200520/african-humanitarian-agency-afha-member-states-and-recs-validation-meeting

[59] See 2015 AU Humanitarian Policy Framework, http://www.peaceau.org/uploads/humanitarian-policy-framewrok-rev-final-version.pdf

[60] UNHCR, Across West Africa dual challenge of conflict and coronavirus threatens millions of people, by UNHCR staff. 17 April, 2020.

[61] Reliefweb, News and Press Release, Informing the humanitarian response in CAR—A logistical and security feat. 24th March, 2020

[62] Reliefweb, News and Press Release, Informing the humanitarian response in CAR—A logistical and security feat. 24th March, 2020

5.2 The Pillars interlinked through conflicts and other forms of threats to human security and development: West and Central Africa subregions

Peace and Security

The ECOWAS and ECCAS in the past 3 decades, have recorded some commendable progress in the promotion of peace and security as part of their respective mandate. This is evidenced by the reduction in the frequency and intensity of inter and intra-state wars.. However, the threats posed by other sources of violence like activities of armed non-state actors started to undermine and weakened the state structures. Leaving human security in a more deplorable form.. The situation continues to grow worse with the inability of member states of ECOWAS and ECCAS to make good progress on the path of socio-political and economic development. Climatic changes in the Sahel, Lake Chad as well as the Great Lakes Region contributes to food insecurity and extremists induced violence.[63] Such violence have been accompanied by unprecedented violations of human rights by state and non-state actors further fueling humanitarian problems in the subregions. Inefficient state institutions, weak human rights protection, governance deficit and corruption has continued to undermine progress for Mali, Nigeria, Cameroon, Central Africa Republic and other states in the subregion.

For most states in the ECCAS subregion, the possibility of conflict in one state rendering neighboring states more volatile is higher. Security threats in Cameroon, marked by activities of terrorist groups and other non-state actors are common challenges for states in the central African region. The Cameroon Defense Force and the Joint Force of neighbouring states in the Central African sub region, have been facing the war against Boko Haram terrorist and the SELEKA militia rebel groups originating from CAR[64]

The western Sahel is confronted by its unique regional challenges that continues to disrupt peace and security. The crises situation in Mali and Nigeria revolves largely around governance deficit, characterized by increasing cases of illicit trades, including proliferation of small arms and the radicalization of groups who have joined externally induced terror franchises. Inclement climatic changes like desertification continues to worsen the age-old farmers-herders relations. Recalling that 70 per cent of West Africans derive their livelihoods from agriculture, livestock rearing inclusive, Mohammed Ibn Chambas emphasized the need to promote peaceful farmers-herders relations.[65]

The ethno-political realities is also very critical in understanding the situation of peace and security in the west and central Africa. Firstly, most states in the subregions are organized in varying ethnic and socio-cultural composition. The multiplicity of ethnicities has posed a challenge of social cohesion, especially with the exploitation along political and constitutionally faulty lines. This has

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[63] World Economic Forum, Robert Muggah and Jose Luengo Cabrera, The Sahel is engulfed by violence, food insecurity and extremist are largely to blame. 23 January, 2019.

[64] Cameroon 2020 Crime and Safety Report. Available at http//www.osac.gov/country/Cameroon/content/detail/regort. Accessed 21/10/2020.

[65] UN News, West Africa 'shaken by unprecedented violence', UN Envoy tells Security Council. 16 December, 2019

not only hampered peace and security, but also affected development in the longer-term.[66] Identity based conflicts as seen in Cote d'Ivoire, activities of Jihadits in Mali and Burkina Faso has heightened the challenge of instability constituted by the lack of the much-needed social cohesion amongst the various peoples that comprise the state. This weakness found more expression from the legacy of colonial socio-economic administration, further exploited along primordial and religious lines especially for strategic political interests or what could be referred to as the politicization of ethnicity. Added to this, is the reality that the subregion has a track record of state fragility.[67]

The West African subregion also has a long history of political crisis, characterized by military coups and forceful tenure elongation in offices leading to dubious constitutional reforms and political instabilities. For example, change of powers have often been conflictual, with only very few cases of peaceful power turnovers[68].

Since gaining independence from France in 1960, the Central African Republic (CAR) has experienced chronic instability and outbreak of violent conflicts[69]. This has taken a different dimension since late 2013, when a coalition of armed groups (SELEKA) sought to assume control of the country. This was followed by an unprecedented wave of violence that led to a bloody coup d'etat that was headed by Michel Djotodia[70]. While a transitional government was able to hold the country's first peaceful democratic election in 2016, there are still ongoing violence and instability that threatens progress made. By 2018, intensifying clashes and deep division caused a spike in the violence, leading to a record 1.1million people displaced by the conflict making CAR one of the deadliest countries in the world for aid workers[71].

According to the Final Report of the Panel of Experts on the Central African Republic drafted pursuant to UN Security Council Resolution 2507 (2020)[72], the peace and security situation in CAR today is strongly affected by the prospect of presidential and legislative elections scheduled for December 2020 and March 2021 respectively. The report reveals major violations of human rights and international humanitarian law characterized by targeted killings, sexual violence as well as forced relocation of displaced communities by combatants in Ndele and Birao. The series of clashes is also fueled by transboundary arrivals of fighters and weaponry from Sudan.

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[66] Babafemi A. Badejo, "Politicization of Ethnicity, Inequities and Electoral Violence in Kenya," Centre for Black and African Arts and Civilization, Occasional Monograph, No. 9, 2008

[67] International Crisis Group Report, Implementing Peace and Security Architecture (III): West Africa

[68] Babafemi Badejo, Sit-Tight Presidents Syndrome: A Changing African Past. . https://medium.com/integrity-online/sit-tight-presidents-syndrome-a-changing-african-past-5b6220bfc84b

[69] A Conversation with Central African Republic President Touadera. Prospects for Peace in the Central African Republic. Available at http//www.issat.dcaf.ch/learn/SSR-in-practice/Countries-Regions/Centra-African-Republic. Accessed 21/10/2020.

[70] See also BBC News, Central African Republic profile Timeline, 1 August, 2018

[71] A Conversation with Central African Republic President Touadera. Prospects for Peace in the Central African Republic. Available at http//www.issat.dcaf.ch/learn/SSR-in-practice/Countries-Regions/Centra-African-Republic. Accessed 21/10/2020.

[72] Available at http//www.reliefweb.int/report/central-african-republic/final-report-panel-experts-central-african-republic-extended. Accessed 21/10/2020.

Regional issues like armed trafficking, and illegal/ corrupt exploitation of resources have continued to pose threat to peace, whilst fueling crimes and crisis[73]. Arms in transit to CAR have consistently been seized by the authorities. Armed groups continue to benefit from the increase in artisanal gold production as a result of shortcomings in the procedures and rules intended to allow the CAR and neighboring countries to effectively tackle gold smuggling. The government also continues to issue mining permits in areas outside of its control, raising the risk of armed groups receiving financing through the exploitation of natural resources.[74] The year 2020 in CAR has also shown the potential threats to peace and security by strategic and sponsored inflammatory positions, from politicians and other interest groups across the social media space and other news media[75]

The security situation in some areas of the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) is characterized by sustained inter-ethnic conflicts and political violence amongst various groups like North Kivu, South Kivu, and Ituri.[76] According to the UNHCR, the UN Refugee Agency, the activities of several non-state actors and armed groups continue to threaten peace and security, as the Congolese armed forces (FARDC) and the UN Stabilization Mission (MONUSCO) have had to contend with them on several attacks on civilians. Exchange of fire between the Congolese forces and non-state armed groups in several states like North Kivu, Beni, Masisi, Rutshuru and Lubero have resulted in large scale civilian deaths, displacements of people, as well as grave human rights violations. The UNHCR has tried to describe how the situation continues to deteriorate since 2018, in spite of efforts aimed at resolution.[77] In December 2018, the UNHCR estimated that 88,000 homes were destroyed in North Kivu and Ituri as a result of ongoing violence and 100,000 people in Ituri's Djugu Terrirory have been displaced due to new waves of violence since September of that year[78].

The UN Envoy for West Africa and the Sahel region, Mohamed Ibn Chambas, while acknowledging the interlinkages between terrorism, organized crime and intercommunal violence, argued the importance of distinguishing each as a driver of violence.[79]. He identified factors driving local conflicts in West Africa and the Sahel to include:

- Governance deficit, particularly poor management of natural resources

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[73] Global Initiative Against Transnational Organised Crime, Illicit economies fuel CAR conflict—UN, 26 February, 2020.

[74] "UNHCR Position on Returns to North Kivu, South Kivu, Ituri and Adjacent Areas in the Democratic Republic of Congo Affected by Ongoing Conflict and Violence" September 2019. Available at http//www.refworl.org. Accessed 21/10/2020.

[75] A Conversation with Central African Republic President Touadera. Prospects for Peace in the Central African Republic. Available at http//www.issat.dcaf.ch/learn/SSR-in-practice/Countries-Regions/Centra-African-Republic. Accessed 21/10/2020.

[76] "UNHCR Position on Returns to North Kivu, South Kivu, Ituri and Adjacent Areas in the Democratic Republic of Congo Affected by Ongoing Conflict and Violence" September 2019. Available at http//www.refworl.org. Accessed 21/10/2020.

[77] "UNHCR Position on Returns to North Kivu, South Kivu, Ituri and Adjacent Areas in the Democratic Republic of Congo Affected by Ongoing Conflict and Violence" September 2019. Available at http//www.refworl.org. Accessed 21/10/2020.

[78] UNHCR warns of massive shelter needs of DR Congo's displaced. 14 December,2018

[79] UN News, West Africa 'shaken by unprecedented violence', UN Envoy tells Security Council. 16 December,2019

- Inequalities and marginalization
- Corruption
- Governments' failure to deliver on security and justice. This failure is often exploited by extremists, who provide safety, protection and social services in areas under their control[80]

According to the International Peace Institute, west Africa's complex security challenges are a function of three broad factors[81]:

1. The region's natural resources, endowments, the vulnerabilities inherent in its geographical location, and environmental and demographic factors.
2. Pressures from internal and international governance processes
3. Pressures from regional and external politics

Terrorism

The challenge of growing transborder terror franchise movements, such as the cases of Boko Haram in the Lake Chad basin starting since 2002, the rise of al-Qaeda loyalist (JNIM) in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM), the Islamic State West Africa (ISWA), Jama'at Ahl as-Sunnah lid-Da'wah wa'l-Jihad (JASDJ) taken hostages from Cameroon and Niger, Ansarul Muslimina Fi Biladis Sudan (Vanguard for the protection of Muslims in Black Africa), Islamic State Greater Sahara (ISGS), Al Murabitoun, Ansar Dine[82] and other extremist movements in the Sahel, Northern Nigeria, Central Africa Republic etc. continues to gain momentum. The UN Envoy for West Africa and Sahel, noted that the strategy and objectives of armed groups in the region are "in the public domain", citing Al Qaeda militants as using local dynamics to spread extremism[83] ECOWAS subsequently adopted an anti-terrorist strategy for the first time in February 2013. The strategy focuses on prevention, prosecution and reconstruction – and provides for the creation of an anti-terrorist coordination unit, an ECOWAS arrest warrant and a blacklist of terrorist and criminal networks.[84] On 21st December, 2019, the ECOWAS Heads of State Summit, adopted a 2020-2024 action plan to eradicate terrorism in the sub-region.[85]

The activities of the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) in Central Africa since 1980s has been perpetuating terror in DRC, CAR, and South Sudan.

Transnational organized crimes to mention a few, such as drugs and arms peddling, human trafficking, kidnapping, illicit arms deal, money laundering etc) have all become so linked with

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[80] Ibid.

[81] Abdel-Fatau Musah, West Africa: Governance and Security in a Changing Region. Africa Program Working Paper Series, International Peace Institute. February 2009.

[82] Gov.UK, Nigeria Terrorism.

[83] Ibid.

[84] International Crisis Group Report, Implementing Peace and Security Architecture (III): West Africa. P.8

[85] UN News, 'Unprecedented terrorist violence' in West Africa, Sahel region. 8 January, 2020
See also, Security Council Report, West Africa: Briefing and Consultations. January 7, 2020

the activities of terrorist groups and their sourcing of finance. This development has made the search for peace, security and stability very difficult in the sub-regions[86].

A number of efforts at the AU and UN level has been put in place against terrorism. For example, The 1999 Convention on the Prevention and Combating of Terrorism, the 2002 AU Plan of Action for the prevention and combating of terrorism, the AU's cooperative mechanisms being implemented by the African Centre for the Study and Research on Terrorism (ACSRT), the Nouakchott process on the enhancement of Security Cooperation and the Operationalization of the African Peace and Security Architecture, the Regional Cooperation Initiative for the Elimination of the Lord's Resistance Army (RCI-LRA) and the AU Mission in Somalia (AMISOM)[87]

The following factors have worked against progress in the fight against terrorism in west and central Africa:

- Government institutional weaknesses, very porous and poor boarder management making room for transboundary criminal activities to thrive.
- Ravaging poverty, unemployment and under empowerment, high illiteracy creates a readily available vulnerable pool of recruits and loyalist for terror groups. For example, in Nigeria, there is only about 50% literacy in North-East with over 70% unemployment[88]

Poor motivation for the Security and Defense Force, makes them prone to compromises and ineffectiveness. The inadequate supply of security personnel (Military and Police) as well as lack of adequate motivation. In Nigeria, for example, the police are understaffed and poorly equipped. During the defense of the security service's 2019 budget, Acting Inspector-General of Police Mohammed Adamu, (before being subsequently confirmed), informed Nigeria that under-staffing was the main problem of the force that manifests in the comical state of the Nigerian Police Force. For him, there was also the problem of under-funding resulting in being under-equipped to fight crime. He pointed out that one police officer to 662 citizens, is grossly inadequate.[89]

This has resulted in the conscription of local forces or vigilante groups, with its peculiar challenges of gross human rights abuse, compromise and corruption, high-handedness and sometimes lawlessness. This has been the case with such local security outfits as the Civilian Joint Task Force (CJTF) created under the last administration called BOYES (Borno Youth Volunteers).[90] JTF in the Niger Delta, Special Task Force in Plateau and Hisbah Police all in Nigeria.

In some instances, the federal police force were overpowered by notorious non state elements. For example, in Nigeria, there were known cases of police stations ambush. Senior State functionaries have not been spared either. An example was the Burukutu Divisional Police Officer, Area

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[86] African Union, Report of the Chairperson of the Commission on Terrorism and Violent Extremism in Africa at the Peace and Security Council 455th Meeting at the Level of Heads of State and Government, Nairobi, Kenya. September 2, 2014.

[87] African Union, Report of the Chairperson of the Commission on Terrorism and Violent Extremism in Africa at the Peace and Security Council 455th Meeting at the Level of Heads of State and Government, Nairobi, Kenya. September 2, 2014.

[88] Open letter to President, General Muhammadu Buhari by former President Olusegun Obasanjo

[89] Babafemi A. Badejo, Rethinking Security Initiatives in Nigeria, (Lagos: Yintab Books, 2020) p.60

[90] On this, and more please see a detailed report in https://www.thisdaylive.com/index.php/2020/01/13/23states-run-local-security-outfits-as-groups-demand-decentralised-policing/ [10]Ibid

Commander and the Council Caretaker Chairman, who were on assessment tour of villages in Tom Anyiin and Tom-Ataan communities, Mbaya Tombu in Burukutu Local Government Area of Benue State, three years ago.[91] Another brazen display of disregard for constituted authority was in 2013, after the convoy of former Benue State Governor, Dr. Gabriel Suswam, was attacked at Tse Aekenyi in Guma LGA of Benue State.[92]

In October 2020, at the heat of the #ENDSARS peaceful protest by young Nigerians, demanding the scrapping of the notorious Federal Special Anti-Robbery Squad as well as police reforms, there were reported cases of hoodlums taking over entire police stations stealing arms and uniforms and even burning some down.[93]

Radicalization and violence extremists: Strong international networks

There has been an escalation of casualties from terrorist activities in Mali, Nigeria, Niger, Chad and Burkina Faso. As at 2016 there were 770, which increased to 4,000 by 2019 alone. Chambas noted a recent shift from Mali to Burkina Faso, expanding the threats for coastal states in west Africa. Deaths also rose from 80 in 2016 to over 1,800 in 2019 in Burkina Faso[94]. In the past 10 years, the Boko Haram insurgency has menacingly ravaged the northeast of the country. More than 30,000 people have been killed in Nigeria's long-standing conflict with Boko Haram. About two million people have fled their homes and another 22,000 are missing, believed to have been conscripted. In April 2014, the abduction of the 276 girls from a school in Chibok, a village in Borno State, northeast Nigeria, was perhaps one of the most popular global headlines. A few managed to escape or be rescued. More than 112 girls remain missing. This is in spite of all the efforts of the government, evidenced in her consistent claim of victory over Boko Haram. Regrettably, the potency and the activities of Boko Haram, in their areas of attacks has remained recurring[95].

Addressing the menace of transboundary crimes, especially illicit deals in arms and drugs, illicit financial flows and funding, requires a lot of international cooperation. ECOWAS also adopted a regional action plan against drugs trafficking and transnational crime. At the Joint Summit in Yaounde of the Heads of States and Governments of ECOWAS, ECCAS and the Gulf of Guinea Commission (GGC) on Maritime Safety and Security in the Gulf of Guinea, three Strategic documents were endorsed, namely: a political Declaration; a Memorandum of Understanding and a Code of Conduct on the repression of piracy, armed robbery and other illicit maritime activities in West and Central Africa[96] The ECOWAS formulated an integrated maritime security strategy that was adopted by the summit of heads of state in March 2014, it created three operational zones and a regional maritime coordination centre. Putting into practice a "pilot" zone, the one

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[91] Evelyn Usman and Victor Arjiromanus, Nigeria: Killer Herdsmen—That BBC Rating! Story of Sorrow, Tears and Blood Across the Country, All Africa. 20 July 2019.

[92] Ibid.

[93] Pulse.ng reports, Thugs burn down police station in Lagos as #EndSARS protest are hijacked by hoodlums. 10/20/2020

[94] UN News, 'Unprecedented terrorist violence' in West Africa, Sahel region. 8 janiuauary, 2020

[95] Open letter to President, General Muhammadu Buhari by former President Olusegun Obasanjo

[96] Neptune P2P Group, Action plan on integrated maritime strategy. November 7, 2013.

experiencing most maritime crime, which includes Benin, Niger, Nigeria and Togo, has been the first test of this new undertaking[97].

Arms and weapons movement

Various RECs have continued to innovate solutions in the fight against small arms. For instance, in 1999, at the initiative of Mali, which has dealt with arms trafficking for several decades, ECOWAS adopted a moratorium on the import, export and manufacture of small arms in West Africa. An even more restrictive convention on small arms and light weapons followed in 2006. These two documents prohibited the transfer of small arms and introduced a system of exemptions managed by the ECOWAS Commission. States wanting to import arms must submit a request with their reasons for doing so to the Commission, which then consults member states for approval. This, therefore, gives each state the right to scrutinize the arms import of its neighbours.[98]

Similarly, the Central African subregion, also has the Kinshasa Convention (The Central African Convention for the Control of Small Arms and Light Weapons, Their Ammunition, Parts and Components that can be used for their Manufacture, Repair or Assembly) which aims at regulating small arms and light weapons (SALW) and combating their illicit trade and trafficking in Central Africa[99]

ECOWAS has made progress in focusing on human security, one of the pillars of its visionary development strategy. In fact, in a Vision 2020, adopted in June 2007 in Abuja, ECOWAS envisioned the transformation of the organization from an "ECOWAS of states" into an "ECOWAS of peoples".[100] Achieving human security in West Africa, would entail addressing the following concerns:

- Extreme poverty and social exclusion
- Human rights violations, especially women's and children's rights
- Bad political and economic governance
- The proliferation of small arms
- Food insecurity
- Environmental degradation
- Illiteracy
- Endemic diseases

The United Nations Integrated Strategy for the Sahel, (UNISS) the United Nations Support Plan for the Sahel, focused on promoting cross-border cooperation for stability and development, preventing and resolving conflicts, promoting access to justice, empowering youth for peace and

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[97] According to the ICG report on the implementation of peace and security architecture (III) in west Africa, this inter-regional cooperation initiative involved ECOWAS, the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS) and the Gulf of Guinea Commission and resulted in September 2014 in the creation of a centre in Yaoundé, Cameroon.

[98] International Crisis Group Report, Implementing Peace and Security Architecture (III): West Africa. P.8

[99] Kinshasa Convention- Chapter 1, Article 1.

[100] "Driving a People-Centred Regional Integration", speech by H.E. James Victor Gbeho, president of the ECOWAS Commission, on the 36th anniversary of the creation of ECOWAS, Abuja, 27 May 2011. p.9

development in the Sahel are major United Nations inspired attempt at broader or holistic solution seeking methods. Even though the region is faced more with security challenges and threats to peace, adopting a security focused method, with the nature of interconnectedness of the challenges, would be ineffective. Interlinked approaches leveraging on ideas cutting across national, regional and international levels would be very important.

Others include:

- The G5 Sahel Joint Force
- United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA)
- France's Operation Barkhane
- The Centre for Strategies for Security in the Sahel Sahara Region, established up in 2011, helps countries in the Sahel region in addressing her daunting security and development challenges
- European Union Training Mission in Mali (EUTM Mali) and programmes like EU Parsec conduct inclusive work to pave the way for the country's long-term stabilization

The Global Terrorism Index reports, and the Fragile States rankings provides a pictorial representation of the extent of the threats of terrorism, and the level to which state control and capacity of governance has deteriorated in the west and central Africa sub-regions.

The Global Terrorism Index released on Thursday 26th November, 2020, showed that for the sixth consecutive year, Nigeria has retained its position as the third country most ravaged by insurgency in the world[101] with the sustained activities of Boko Haram in neighbouring states of Cameroon, Chad and Niger leaving the region heavily threatened[102]. Mali has been struggling to build peace and ensure security especially after the armed rebellion in northern Mali in January 2012. The crisis began as a Tuareg rebellion against the Malian government, the fourth in a series of rebellions in Mali from 1963. The 2012 rebellion turned into a violent extremist insurgency as a number of violent extremist groups joined them and took over from several towns and territories in northern Mali[103]. The strong focus on military security in response to the 2012 events, including increased international efforts since January 2013 so far, has limited impact, with Mali remaining very volatile. The country is struggling to improve the security situation despite the presence and support of friendly international forces (Serval then Barkhane, MINUSMA, G5 Sahel) and technical and financial partners. Instead, new battle lines have emerged, armed groups and local militias and vigilantes have proliferated, illicit border trafficking and effects on high-risk populations, especially the youths[104] and other civilians have become a direct target of attacks, and the instrumentalization of ethnic identities has fueled intercommunity conflicts of unprecedented violence.

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[101] City News, Report: Nigeria Third Most Terrorized Country in the World. November 26, 2020

[102] Ibid.

[103] Gregory Chauzal and Thibault van Damme, CRU Report, The Roos of Mali's conflict: Moving beyind the 2012 crisis. March 2015. Pp10-11

[104] Gregory Chauzal, A snapshot of Mali three years after the 2012 crisis. 8 June, 2015

According to the Fragile States rankings, compiled by the United States Fund for Peace[105]. Indicators used to measure fragility shows that most of the states in the west and central African sub-regions are spiraling down in terms of development. Common indicators such as effectiveness of the central government, control over territorial integrity, sectional tendencies, lines of schism, non-provision of public services, widespread corruption and criminality, deteriorating refugee situation, forced movement of people and rapid economic decline.

Cumulative data on Global Terrorism Index

V.H-Very High, H-High, M-Medium, L-Low, V.L-Very law, N.I- No impact

S/n	ECOWAS STATES	2019/20 rank	2018/19 Rank	2017/18 rank	ECCAS STATES	2020 rank	2019 rank	2018 Rank
1	Mali	13 H	22	25	Angola	52 M	43	117
2	Nigeria	3 V.H	3	3	Burundi	33 H	32	28
3	Burkina Faso	27 M	37	43	Cameroon	15 H	16	15
4	Ghana	86 V.L	122	110	CAR	14 H	15	19
5	Togo	138 N.I	138	130	Chad	33 M	38	34
6	Benin	138 N.I	138	130	Congo	70 L	61	48
7	Cote D'Iviore	72 L	63	54	DR Congo	10 H	11	13
8	Liberia	126 V.L	119	121	Equatorial Guinea	138 N.I	138	130
9	Sierra Leone	108	95	101	Gabon	105	93	130

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[105] Hallmark news, Nigeria ranks 14 in global list of "failed states" 2020. 4th September, 2020

		V.L				V.L		
10	Guinea	100 V.L	112	101	Rwanda	66 L	76	81
11	Guinea Bissau	138 N.I	138	130	Sao Tome and Principe	-		
12	The Gambia	138 N.I	138	130				
13	Senegal	93 V.L	96					
14	Cape Verde	-						
15	Niger	23 H	23	20				

Source: Cumulative data on Global Terrorism Index

Data on State Fragility Index Ranking

Very Sustainable, Sustainable, Very stable, more stable, warning, elevated warning, high warning, Alert, High alert, very high alert

S/n	ECOWAS STATES	2019/20 rank	2018/19 Rank	ECCAS STATES	2020 Rank	2019 rank
1	Mali	16 Alert	21 Alert	Angola	34 H.W	37 H.W
2	Nigeria	14 Alert	14 Alert	Burundi	12 Alert	15 Alert
3	Burkina Faso	37 H.W	47 H.W	Cameroon	11 Alert	16 Alert
4	Ghana	108 W	110 W	CAR	6 H. A	6 H.Alert
5	Togo	38 H.W	38 H.W	Chad	7 H.Alert	7 H.A
6	Benin	77 E.W	75 E.W	Congo	25 Alert	27 Alert
7	Cote D'Iviore	32 H.W	29 Alert	DR Congo	5 H.A	5 V.H.A
8	Liberia	31 Alert	30 Alert	Equatorial Guinea	45 H.W	53 H.W
9	Sierra Leon	42 H.W	39 H.W	Gabon	90 W	92 E.W
10	Guinea	15	11	Rwanda	35	37

					H.W	H.W
		Alert	Alert		H.W	H.W
11	Guinea Bissau	23 Alert	19 Alert	Sao Tome and Principe	83 E.W	88 E.W
12	The Gambia	51 H.W	47 H.W			
13	Senegal	71 E.W	66 E.W			
14	Cape Verde	106 W	106 W			
15	Niger	19 Alert	18 Alert			

Source: Cumulative Fragile State Index Rankings

Resource exploration and environment induced threats to peace and security

Threats to peace and security have arisen from ecological questions, either resulting from nature induced environmental crisis, and/or man-made/resource exploration crisis. Human activities have also influenced changes as global warming, extreme weather conditions, beyond normal surges in sea levels, desertification, limited availability of water, green lands for grazing by cattle herders and cultivation of crops by farmers, food and water insecurity[106]. In this case, countries with lesser resilience and social security capacity suffer more from the risks of political instability economic crisis and eventual threats to life.

In another unfortunate twist in Africa, resources which should fuel or support a state of development and progress for the people and economy, have become the reasons behind conflicts, or used to fuel conflicts in certain states. This is the basis for the popular thinking that resources have become a curse more than a blessing in Nigeria. According to the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), "valuable minerals become conflict minerals when their control, exploitation, trade, taxation or protection contributes to, or benefits from, armed conflicts[107]

Data from a survey on the rating of peace amongst 14 states in the west and central African subregion, shows that amongst 252 respondents, only 1 (0.4%) considers peace to be very high. 10 (4.0%) considers peace to be high. 103(40.8%), considers peace to be medium. 138 (54.8%) considers peace to be low.

Development Pillar

The development pillar encompasses critical issues in economic, social, political and environmental sustainability, as they all affect the general state of wellbeing of the humanity in

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[106] United States Institute of Peace, Ecological Threats to Peace, A look at the 2020 Ecological Register and the Connection Between Conflict and Climate Change. September 22, 2020.
[107] USAID, Minerals and Conflict Toolkit, p.3

the west and central African sub-regions. Some of the critical issues in development, are captured in sectional provisions of the Constitution of member States. For example, the Nigerian Constitution states clearly that the Federal Republic of Nigeria is "a State based on the principles of democracy and social justice"[108]. Specifically, on environment, Article 20 (sub-section 2), of the Constitution states that, "the State shall protect and improve the environment and safeguard the water, air and land, forest and wild life of Nigeria".

However, development that is sustainable in line with the SDGs, goes beyond economic and socio-political variables, especially for developing countries in the west and central African subregions. Development in the broadest sense, cuts across all issues relating to the safety, quality and dignity of life. In other words, the threats to the other pillars, inadvertently also applies to development. Creative solutions that addresses issues of the other pillars, in the long run, would be addressing the question of development. It is important to assess the performance, challenges and opportunities in driving progress on each of the key issues related to development in the subregions.

Set back in Sustainable Growth, Human Development and Poverty Reduction.
The critical economic challenges, lies around the failure to foster sustainable rapid economic growth that addresses the needs of the large population.[109]. Addressing the growth challenge is fundamental to poverty reduction. Human development indices confirm the very slow pace of growth and development for peoples within the areas of study. The visible state of hunger and malnutrition, lack of access to health care services and the level of performance in key development indicators such as the life expectancy, happiness index, corruption perception index, press freedom, etc. are of concern to a conceptualization of development.

Stockholm International Peace Research Institute's (SIPRI) Central Mali research project identified four main findings that could help strengthen global strategies for peace and development[110]:

1. Inclusive processes (inclusive processes of disarmament, of reintegration and community reconciliation)
2. Delivery of public services (The state should leverage on the delivery of public goods)
3. Concrete human security measures (employment, economic development) The absence or inadequacy of this, has heightened the lack or loss of trust in state/formal institutions, and a recourse to other types of non-states actors
4. Dedicated programmes or intervention for the most vulnerable populations. (women, young girls and youths) This groups are more likely to suffer the specialized consequences of government's failures, poor judicial systems, healthcare, education, food, employment. They are also more likely to be exploited by non-state actors and fall victims.

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[108] See Chapter II (Fundamental objectives and directive principles of State Policy) Article 15 (1) of the 1999 Constitution of Nigeria.

[109] Federal Government of Nigeria, Nigeria's Path to Sustainable Development through Green Economy. Country Report to the Rio+20 Summit. June 2012.

[110] Dr Gregory Chauzal in Reliefweb, Achieving Peace and Development in Central Mali: Looking back on one year of SIPRI's work. 23 june, 2020

The data compiled from some indices in Nigeria, provides a picture of the situation for most states in the west and central African sub regions.

UNDP HDI Ranking of mostly 189 countries, using long and healthy life, knowledge and standard of living.

Year	score	rank
2019	0.534	158th
2018	0.532	157th
2017	0.532	157th
2016	0.53	156th
2015	0.527	226th
2014	0.524	225th
2013	0.519	224th
2012	0.512	224th
2011	0.494	228th
2010	0.484	231st
2009	0.49	225th
2008	0.485	224th
2007	0.479	225th
2006	0.475	223rd
2005	0.465	225th
2004	0.462	219th
2003	0.443	220th

Nigeria (Happiness Index) About 156 countries considers motivation for happiness as social support, income healthy life, trust in government and business, freedom of making life decision, generosity etc

Year	score	rank
2018	5.155	91
2017	5.074	95
2016	4.875	103
2015	5.268	78
2013	5.248	82

Press Freedom Index measuring mostly 180 countries

Year	score	rank
2018	37.41	119
2017	39.69	122
2016	35.90	116
2015	34.09	111
2014	34.24	112
2013	34.11	115

2012 56.40 126
2010 51.50 145
2009 46.00 135
2008 37.75 131
2007 49.83 131
2006 32.23 120
2005 38.75 123
2004 37.75 117
2003 31.50 103
2002 15.50 049

Nigeria T.I Corruption perception Index (180 Countries)

Year	Score	rank
1996	54/54	
1997	52/52	
1998	81/85	19
1999	98/99	16
2000	90/90	12
2001	90/91	10
2002	101/102	16
2003	132/133	14
2004	144/146	16
2005	152/159	19
2006	142/163	22
2007	147/180	22
2008	121/180	27
2009	130/180	25
2010	134/178	24
2011	143/183	24.49
2012	139/176	27
2013	144/177	25
2014	136/175	27
2015	136/168	26
2016	136/176	28
2017	148/180	27
2018	144/180	27

In Mali, Poverty rate stood at 44.9% in 2017, a percentage point higher than the level estimated in 2010 (43.7%). The good economic performances recorded recently (economic growth has been

relatively high, around 5% in average between 2012 and 2017), failed to significantly reduce the poverty.[111]

In Cameroon, the economic growth has slowed down and stood at 3.5 % in 2017 (against 4.5 per cent in 2016 and 5.2% in 2015), basically as a result of the drop by 17 % in oil production. In the mid-term, prospects remain positive after the revival of 2018 (3.8 per cent) and a projection of 4.4 % in 2019 and 5 % in the medium-term. However, these achievements and growth prospects are largely below the 7 % required to achieve the goals expected in terms of sustainable development[112]. The government is therefore planning to strengthen the conditions that will enable the private sector to take the relay from public investment to drive growth, through the promotion of greater diversification of the economy.

The governance/leadership Challenge. The place of quality transformative and visionary leadership in the west and central Africa subregion, cannot be overstated. Transformative and visionary leadership or governance must be all encompassing. Promoting participation of all stakeholders in national development; ensuring transparency and accountability in the management of public resources and public policy development as well as improved electoral systems. Transformative governance would also create a better playing ground for civil society organizations and the private sector, promote balance and reduce all forms of inequalities, respond effectively to political instability, strengthen the rule of law, and effectively address the issue of corruption.

Motivation and freedom for political participation are very critical in measuring development, especially in democratic settings. The African Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance in articles 2,3 and 4, makes it a government's responsibility to promote the establishment of the necessary conditions to foster citizenship participation in democratic and development processes. It goes further to describe participation in stating that the state "shall recognize popular participation through universal suffrage as the inalienable right of the people". It is therefore a thing of responsibility on the part of government to ensure participation for the sake of the country's political development[113].

In Mali, from 1992 to 2018, the presidential and legislative elections were held regularly, except for the legislative ones in 2018. For the presidential elections, the participation rates are low. They have always been less than 50%. The reasons for this ranges from security fears, electoral fraud, and only little confidence in the commitment of political parties improving the lives of the people, as evidenced by the survey carried out among the populations on their perceptions and aspirations[114].

Set back from failure in Conflict Prevention and Management

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[111] See IMF Country Report, Mali: Poverty Reduction and Strategy Ppaer—2010 Progress Report. December,2011.

[112] Sustainable Development Goals Knowledge Platform, Voluntary National Review 2019, Cameroon (concerning economic growth)

[113] Tembeng Hedley Tah, Participation for Political Development in Cameroon, in International Journal of Humanities and Social Science. Vol 4, No.7(1) May 2014. P.151

[114] Michael Bratton, Massa Coulibaly, and Fabiana Machado, Popular Perceptions of Good Governance in Mali. MSU Working Papers on Political Reforms in Africa. Afrobarometer Paper No.9. March 2000.

Conflicts and threats to peace and security, remain a major challenge in the west and central African subregions. The outcome of conflicts has increased human suffering, poverty, material destruction, lost of sources of livelihoods, increased vulnerable and internally displaced persons. Conflicts in the areas of study poses a major threat to socio-political and economic stability, very critical in the allocation of public resources, private sector investment and growth, capacity building and retention and sustained economic growth and poverty reduction.

The established background of crisis, conflicts and threat to peace and security, poses significant devastating consequences for human development. In Mali, the activities of Jihadists groups allowing for a long period of threats to security and peace, directly impedes opportunities for development. For example, the prevalent crisis-torn and infrastructurally chaotic situation, typically prevents the state from accessing the areas in which the people have the greatest need for infrastructure and basic social services.

With our conceptualization of development and all its key components, economic empowerment as well as sources of livelihoods are very central. Long staying situations of insecurity directly impacts on certain sectors like tourism, investors confidence for international trade. All occupations and sources of livelihoods related are affected.

Also, significant resources invested in managing armed conflicts, directly cuts down on resources and investment for significant economic development.

Set back in Private Sector Development in Africa. Sustainable economic development in the subregions, needs the participation of the private sector. The government and its agencies must continually evolve and invest in a conducive policy environment, infrastructure, effective public sector institutions, and security of investment. African countries need an enabling environment for both domestic and foreign private investment to flourish.[115]

From the result of a survey responded to by 252 respondents, it is overwhelmingly clear that corruption and lack of transparency is a major threat to development, for most states in west and central Africa. 174(69.0%) strongly agrees that corruption and lack of transparency are the major threats to development in their various west and central African countries.

Human Rights

The countries in the Sahel, West and Central Africa, are subject to a number of instruments on human rights. The Universal Declaration on Human Rights at the level of the UN stands out. At the level of the African Union, there are instruments such as the 1981 Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights; the AU Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights, as well as the African Court on Human and Peoples' Rights.

Apart from these human rights instruments, member states in the Sahel, West and Central Africa subregions have agreed to a range of regional frameworks to promote the principle and practice of democracy and governance, as well as advance human rights and the rule of law. For instance,

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[115]Soumana SAKO and Genevesi Ogiogio, Africa: Major Development Challenges & Their Capacity Building Dimension. ACBF Occasional Paper, No. 1, 2002

these include: the principle prohibiting unconstitutional changes of government, the NEPAD Declaration on Democracy, Political, Economic and Corporate Governance and the associated APRM, the 2007 AU Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance (ACDEG). The charter seeks to ensure that African countries adhere to shared key values such as democracy, human rights, rule of law and the independence of the Judiciary. It also reaffirms the importance of regular, transparent, free and fair elections; gender equality; transparency, fairness and citizen participation in development processes and the management of public affairs; and the condemnation and rejection of unconstitutional changes of government[116].

Within West Africa, there are other instruments under the auspices of ECOWAS. For instance, there is the ECOWAS Protocol on Democracy and Good Governance adopted in 2001 as well as the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) Court of Justice.

Restorative or transitional justice is another critical tool in strengthening human rights and the rule of law in the subregions. Transitional or restorative justice systems would facilitate the resolution of past human rights abuses through accountability, truth and reparations to the victims[117]. Mali adopted a transitional roadmap in January 2013 that created a Dialogue and Reconciliation Commission, a truth-seeking mechanism to facilitate inclusive national dialogue towards addressing foundational causes of crisis. The Commission handles issues like, identifying which armed groups should participate in the national dialogue; take inventory of human rights violations committed during crisis; propose all necessary measures to help the victims overcome the trauma they have gone through; and make proposals for actions that can help strengthen social cohesion and national unity and focus on dialogue and peace.

Article 15, of Mali's February 1992 Constitution, contains a Bill of Rights proclaiming individual civil and political rights, social and cultural rights, as well as group or third generation rights such as the right to a clean environment. Mali has adopted several laws protecting human rights, such as the 2009 laws on medical assistance and on compulsory health-care scheme, a 2012 law to combat human trafficking, A family code first adopted in 2009, which developed measures to increase equality between men and women in relation to marital status, parental rights, ownership of land inheritance, wages and pensions, employment laws and education.

Mali also established a number of institutions to support these normative frameworks. Such as the 2009 human rights commission mandated to promote and protect human rights. Mali also has the Mediateur de la Republique, an Ombudsman office between citizens and public administration, whose mandate cuts across conflict resolution and the promotion of governance, human rights and the rule of law.

Jihadists and Islamic fighters since 2012 are still present in the northern regions of Mali. Deliberate killings of unarmed civilians by security forces in Mali, Burkina Faso may constitute war crimes under international law. These armed conflicts often lead to numerous human rights violations, from both armed groups and regular forces, reported by international NGOs.

The human rights situation in Mali deteriorated in 2019, with hundreds of civilians killed by ethnic self-defense groups in numerous incidents, in most cases due to their alleged support for Islamist groups, and during attacks launched by Islamists in the northern and central regions of the country.

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[116] Ibid.

[117] Ibid.

These groups, linked to Al Qaeda and the Islamic State, have targeted Malian security services, peacekeepers, international forces and, increasingly, civilians. Malian security forces subjected many suspects to serious forms of ill-treatment, and several died in detention or disappeared[118].

Little progress has been made in the peace process envisaged to end the 2012-2013 politico-military crisis in the North, particularly in the area of disarmament and the restoration of state authority. The rampant banditry continued in a growing security vacuum.

In central Mali, attacks by Islamist groups, including with explosive devices on the roads, increased from 2017, killing many villagers. The state's counterterrorism operations have resulted in dozens of summary executions and ill-treatment[119]. These armed conflicts often lead to numerous human rights violations, from both armed groups and regular forces, as reported by international NGOs. For example, Amnesty International reports that security forces in Mali, Niger and Burkina Faso unlawfully caused the death or disappearance of around 200 people in 2020[120].

In 2018, at least 300 civilians were killed in more than 100 incidents of community violence in central and northern Mali. The violence pitted ethnically aligned vigilante groups against communities accused of supporting armed Islamist groups, leading to the looting and destruction of dozens of villages and the displacement of tens of thousands of people.[121]

Little has been done to bring justice to victims of abuse, and rule of law institutions have remained weak. However, the military has opened investigations into allegations of extrajudicial killings by their forces. Aid agencies have suffered dozens of attacks, mostly by bandits, which have undermined their ability to deliver aid[122].

The United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA) has a mandate of protecting civilians, (especially women and children) facilitate the promotion and protection of human rights, national and international justice, humanitarian assistance and cultural preservation.

With the presence of all the above instruments and frameworks at national, regional and international levels, what is required is the political will for enhanced result driven collaboration and implementation, renewed commitments to promoting democracy and governance, protection of human rights and rule of law, strengthening of weak national institutions, regional and international mechanisms.

For most of central Africa, unfortunately, most of the cases of human rights abuses have been associated with the security forces, especially for the cases of detainees and prisoners, denial of fair and speedy trial and restriction of freedoms, poor prison conditions, infringement of privacy, state harassment and imprisonment of journalists, restriction of freedoms of speech, press and association, as well as movement.[123] Societal violence and discrimination against women and

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[118] Human Rights Watch, Mali. Available at www.hrw.org
[119] Human Rights Watch, Mali Events of 2018.
[120]DW, Amnesty Accuses West African forces of human rights abuses in Sahel Region. 10.06.2020
[121] Ibid.
[122] World Report 2018—Mali. www.refworld.org
[123] Cameroon Country Reports on Human Rights Practices for 2011. The US Department of State. Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights and Labour. P.1

girls, Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), child and adult trafficking etc are some human rights issues identified in Cameroon.[124]

Generally, the state of human rights and the rule of law in Cameroon is deplorable. There are suggestions of significant human rights issues such as:[125] unlawful or arbitrary killings, including extrajudicial killings, by security forces, armed Anglophone separatists, and Boko Haram and ISIS-West Africa (ISIS-WA) fighters; forced disappearances by security forces; torture by security forces and non-state armed groups; arbitrary by security forces and non-state armed groups; harsh and life-threatening prison conditions as well as political prisoners;

Other forms of challenges include problems with the independence of the judiciary; the worst forms of restrictions on freedoms of expression, the press, and the internet, violence, threats of violence, or unjustified arrests or prosecutions against journalists, and abuse of criminal libel laws; substantial interference with the rights of peaceful assembly and freedom of association; restrictions on political participation; crimes involving violence against women, in part due to government inaction; violence targeting lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, or intersex (LGBTI) persons; criminalization of consensual same-sex relations; and child labor, including forced child labor[126]. There have been several cases of human rights abuses by government or state officials. Often times investigations of such cases are not followed to the letter, to ensure that justice is done.

Arbitrary Deprivation of Life and Other Unlawful or Politically Motivated Killings; there were several reports that the government or its agents committed arbitrary and unlawful killings through excessive use of force in the execution of official duties. According to a credible organization.[127] The Center for Human Rights and Democracy in Africa, have detailed a number of such cases.

Disappearance; There have been a lot of cases of disappearances, especially of suspects or accused persons. Sometimes, the government security forces were widely believed to be responsible for such disappearances, especially people in political oppositions or Anglophone separatists. Given the prevalence of the challenge, successive Human Rights Watch Reports, have continued to detail such cases.   In a May report, Human Rights Watch (HRW) documented the cases of 26 detainees, including two women and an 18-month-old child, who were held incommunicado at the State Secretariat for Defense for the Gendarmerie (SED) between January 2018 and January 2019, many for several months, without any contact with family, friends, or legal counsel[128].

Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman, or Degrading Treatment or Punishment; Even though it is clear that the constitution and law prohibit all acts of cruelty and inhumane practices, there have been reports of security force members involved in the torture and abuse of citizens. Amnesty International and HRW documented several cases in which security forces severely mistreated

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[124] Ibid

[125] Cameroon Country Reports on Human Rights Practices for 2019. United States Department of State. Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights and Labor. Available at https://www.state.gov/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/CAMEROON-2019-HUMAN-RIGHTS-REPORT.pdf. Accessed 22/10/2020.

[126] Ibid.

[127] The Center for Human Rights and Democracy in Africa based in the Southwest town of Buea.

[128] Human Rights Watch, Cameroon: Routine Torture, Incommunicado Detention. UN Security Council Should Condemn Abuses, Demand Reforms. May 6, 2019.

political opponents, and others where armed separatists mistreated civilians and members of defense forces.

Prison conditions; The dilapidated and very dehumanizing conditions of prisons facilitated characterized by poor food supplies or nutrition, overcrowding, physical abuse, poor sanitary conditions and medical care. In its 2018 country report on Cameroon, Amnesty International indicated that the Central Prison in Maroua, Far North Region, held 1,500 detainees, more than four times the planned capacity. Malnutrition, tuberculosis, bronchitis, malaria, hepatitis, scabies, and numerous other untreated conditions, including infections, parasites, dehydration, and diarrhea, were rampant[129].

In a July 23, 2019, press release following the riots at Yaounde's Kondengui and Buea prisons, Amnesty International noted that prison conditions were dire, stating that until the situation improved there was a strong risk of further violence.[130]

The prevalent atmosphere of conflicts that affected the other pillars, does not exempt the human rights pillar. Long duration conflicts in CAR and DR Congo as well as activities of armed groups in Cameroon and Nigeria and Mali, etc left many people vulnerable. From displacement, to exposure to sexual exploitation, forced labour, etc. Also, in many cases, state security agencies, committed serious human rights violations such as use of violence, extrajudicial killings, torture and disappearances. Often times, in enforcing state policies and programmes, they result to human rights abuses. In Nigeria the activities of task forces and other specialized agencies set up for regulatory functions were often carried out in ways that resulted to human rights abuses. For example, on the 26th of January 2017, a Lagos State High Court ruled that the demolition and threatened demolition of Lagos waterfront communities without adequate notice or provision of alternative shelter amounts to cruel, inhuman and degrading treatments in violation of section 34 of the Nigerian Constitution. This ruling came as victory for the hundreds of thousands of residents of the area.

Recently, freedom of speech and expression in Nigeria, is greatly threatened by the government through The Independent National Commission for the Prohibition of "Hate Speech Bill". The defined objective of the very controversial bill is the promotion of national cohesion and integration through prohibition of ethnic discrimination, hate speech, harassment on ethnic basis, racism and discrimination by way of victimization. On Tuesday, August 4, 2020, the Federal Government of Nigeria announced the increase of fine for hate speech from N500,000 to N5 million[131]. Amnesty International believes the bills on hate speech and social media are dangerous attacks on freedom of expression, saying that the social media is one of the last remaining places where Nigerians can express their opinions freely[132]

The socio-economic rights of many people in the west and central subregions have constantly been trampled upon by state policies and institutions. Many jobs and businesses have been lost, affecting

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[129] Amnesty International, Right Cause, Wrong Means: Human Rights Violated and Justice Denied in Cameroon's fight against Boko Haram

[130] Amnesty International, Cameroon: Gunshots amid prison riot must be investigated. July 23, 2019.

[131] Chikeh Olisah writes in Nairametrics, FG increases hate speech fine from N500,000 to N5 million and moves against monopoly and antitrust". August 4th, 2020

[132] Amnesty International, Nigeria: Bill on hate speech and social media are dangerous attacks on freedom of expression. 4 December, 2019.

the means of livelihoods of many and their social economic rights. Recently, the impact of the various restrictions from the lockdown phase of the pandemic, affected the socio-economic rights of many[133].

The right to sustainable development and protected environment has also not been safeguarded. From poor regulatory system on the nature of relationship with the environment, and sensitivity to the effect of human and industrial activities to very harmful and unsafe harnessing of natural resources, to unhealthy waste management with limited progress towards a circular economy. We have seen how activities of humans have deprived the earth's beauty from thriving. So bad that a glimpse of the beauty of the earth became resplendent as COVID-19 forced human beings into lockdown mode. Sustained indiscriminate intrusions into the wild, dislodging animals and plants' natural existence no doubt contributes to the explosion of zoonotic and infectious diseases. It is needful to pay closer attention to how the COVID-19 pandemic affects agendas 6, 7, 11, 13, 14 and 15 bothering on environmental sustainability.

Women and youths in the west and central subregions, have been more susceptible to human rights threats. SDG 10, clearly stipulates the imperatives for gender inclusion and equality in building a better world. In Nigeria, several issues of human rights abuse like gender-based violence, rape, trafficking, Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)[134], denial of access to education, early or child marriage, domestic servitude and other cultural practices are widespread. Regrettably, many more women and girl child suffered human induced dangerous fate during COVID-19 especially as the world faced lockdowns. There have been increasing gender-based violence, domestic abuse, cutting women off essential protection and sanitary services and social networks.[135] The imposed lockdown has shown us all that there could be several other yet less obvious situations under which the rights of more women could be under threat.

The effects of the poor implementation of human rights protection on younger people continue to grow. The lack of empowerment opportunities and increasing unemployment is very central in the issue facing a lot of young people in the areas covered by this study. For example, the Nigerian Youths are also victims of human rights abuse and threats from various security agencies, especially the Police. Varying degrees of human rights abuses such as harassment, beating and torture, undue detention, invasion of privacy, and searches without warrants, forceful extortions, robbery and threat to life and actual killings with grave impunity are taking place[136].

In October 2020, youths in Nigeria, organized peaceful #ENDSARS protest in various parts of the country, calling for the end of all forms of police brutality, especially for the disbanding of the much dreaded and the notorious Federal Special Anti-Robbery Squad (FSARS), severally accused of human rights violation and unexplained killings. The incident of October 20, 2020 was referred to as Black Tuesday. It saw live bullets fired at unarmed, peaceful protesters, at the Lekki Toll Gate, by men in the Nigerian military uniforms. Reluctantly, the Nigerian military accepted it was

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[133] Kazeem Bello Ajide and Olorunfemi Yasiru Alimi, Estimating the impacts of lockdown on Covid-19 cases in Nigeria. In Transportation Research Interdisciplinary Perspectives. Vol 7. September, 2020.

[134] TC Okeke, USB Anyaehie et al, An Overview of Female Genital Mutilation in Nigeria.

[135] Plan International, How will Covid-19 Affect Girls and Young Women?
See also Africa Renewal News, Covid-19: SG Op-ed on Covid-19's impact on Women. 30th April, 2020

[136] Human Right Watch, "Everyone's in on the game" Corruption and Human Rights Abuses by the Nigerian Police Force.

at the scene but has refused responsibility for the shootings. According to Osai Ojigho, Country Director of Amnesty International, "what happened at Lekki Toll Gate has all the traits of the Nigerian authorities' "pattern of a cover up whenever their defence and security forces commit unlawful killings"[137]

In Rivers State, there was report of killing of persons alleged to be members of the proscribed Indigenous Peoples of Biafra (IPOB) by officers of the Nigerian Military, allegedly on the instructions of the state Government[138].

Efforts at promoting and protecting human rights continue to fail as a result of weak implementation and coordination at the following levels and structures:

- Constitutional obligations
- International obligations
- Local legislation
- Policies
- Administrative actions
- Challenges
- Lapses on the part of regulatory and monitoring bodies
- And resources

Summary of issues of human rights in west and central Africa

- Abuse of civil, political, economic and social rights;
- Restrictions on freedoms of speech and assembly;
- Unchecked impunity and widespread corruption in the judiciary and the police;
- Domestic violence and discrimination against women;
- Child labour, trafficking in persons;
- Discrimination on the basis of primordial or religious backgrounds of certain ethnic groups;[139]
- Limited popular participation in elections and the absence of strong opposition;
- Poor social service delivery especially in the border areas;
- Poor handling of group grievances especially on claims of marginalization;
- A poorly trained, ill-equipped, motivated and divided national army;
- Weakened political institutions, and poor economic growth;
- Extreme poverty;[140]
- Undue grip on the judiciary, with limited access to legal knowledge and assistance;

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[137] Amnesty International, Nigeria: Authorities must stop attempts to cover up Lekki Toll Gate massacre—New investigative timeline. 28th October, 2020

[138] See Statement of the President of the Nigerian Bar Association on the Reported killings in Oyigbo Local Government Area of Rivers State. 1 November, 2020

[139] US State Department, 2011 https://stabilityjournal.org/articles/10.5334/sta.br/print/#B21

[140] UN Sec Gen report on the situation in Mali as at 2013 observed 77% extreme poverty. https://stabilityjournal.org/articles/10.5334/sta.br/print/#B18

- High cost of justice.[141]

Generally, our survey results shows a situation of agreement that there is large scale human rights abuse challenge in most of west and central African subregion. We have attempted to describe the subregional and national peculiarities in the abuse of human rights above.

Humanitarian Pillar: Environment and Interlinkages

The effect of environment changes on the four pillars cannot be overemphasized. However, much of the effects play out as humanitarian challenges.

A number of studies have reasoned that armed conflicts have been hurtful to biodiversity and creatures due to habitat destruction and fragmentation; over-misuse and corruption of regular assets and incrementally pollutes the land and water[142]. On the one hand, the environmental impact of conflict on the environment is scarcely evaluated. Equally, understanding how climate variability could have played part in expanding or diminishing the effects of conflicts in Africa is not yet notable[143].

According to Conflict and Environment Observatory (June 2020)[144], the environmental impacts of conflicts begin long before the war actually begins. Building and sustaining military forces consumes vast quantities of resources. These might be common metals or rare earth elements, water or hydrocarbons. Maintaining military readiness means training, and training consumes resources. Military vehicles, aircrafts, vessels, buildings and infrastructure all require energy, and more often that energy is oil and energy efficiency is low. The CO2 emissions of the largest militaries are greater than many of the world's countries combined.

During conflicts, the environmental impacts vary greatly. Some international armed conflicts may be brief but highly destructive, whereas some civil wars may last for decades but be fought at low intensity. Many contemporary conflicts have blurred the lines, lasting years but with sustained periods of high intensity warfare.[145] High intensity conflicts require and consume vast quantities of fuel, leading to widespread physical damage to sensitive landscapes and biodiversity, as can the intensive use of explosive ordnance. The use of explosive weapons in urban areas creates vast quantities of debris and rubble, which can cause air and soil pollution. Pollution can also be caused by damage to light industry and environmentally sensitive infrastructure such as water treatment plants. The loss of energy supplies can have reverberating effects that are detrimental to the

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[141] See American Bar Association, 2012. https://stabilityjournal.org/articles/10.5334/sta.br/print/#B5
[142] Negasi Solomon et al, "Environmental Impacts and Causes of Conflict in the Horn of Africa: A Review", Earth Science Review-February 2018. Available at https//www.researchgate.net/publication/321270437. Accessed 22/10/2020.
[143] Ibid.
[144] "How does War Damage the Environment". Available at https//www.ceobs.org/how-does-war-damage-the-environment. Accessed 22/10/2020.
[145] Ibid.

environment, shutting down treatment plants or pumping systems or can lead to the use of more polluting fuels or domestic generators.

Severe pollution incidents can be caused when industrial, oil or energy facilities are deliberately attacked, inadvertently damaged or disrupted. In some cases, deliberate attacks on such facilities are used as weapons of war to pollute large areas and spread terror. Other techniques include the destruction of agricultural canals, wells and pumps and the burning of crops[146]. Such tactics threaten food security and livelihoods, increasing the vulnerability of rural communities.[147]

Furthermore, weapons and military materials used during conflicts leave environmental legacies. Land mines, cluster bombs/munitions and other explosive remnants of war can restrict access to agricultural land and pollute soils and water sources with metals and toxic energetic materials.[148] In major conflicts, military scrap may be produced or abandoned, causing a wide range of polluting materials, contaminating soil and ground water while exposing those who work on it to acute health risks. Wrecked or damage ships, submarines and offshore oil infrastructure can cause marine pollution. Many conventional weapons of warfare have toxic constituents such as depleted uranium which is also radioactive.[149]

In addition, easy access to small arms and light weapons can harm wildlife through facilitating increased hunting and poaching, and the ungoverned spaces created by conflict create the ideal conditions for wildlife crime.

Studying the environmental impact of conflicts in the DRC, an ECCAS member state, the University of Gothenburg came up with some principal impacts such as[150]; deforestation, loss of biodiversity, water availability and pollution.

- Deforestation and soil erosion; the Congolese rainforest is of great national as well as global importance. It stores carbon and slows down global climate change and provides a number of ecosystem services including climate regulation, water purification and it helps regulate one of the world's largest river basins, the Congo basin. Currently, the deforestation rate in DRC is 0.3%, lower than the global average of 0.5%. However, it is argued that deforestation (logging and conversion of land) could become a large-scale issue when stability is ensured and infrastructure is developed. In 2002, almost half of the Congolese forests (43.5 million of a total of 108 million hectares) were earmarked for industrial logging, locked up in 25 years contract before and during the war. Despite the fact that industrial logging has not yet taken off due to instability, deforestation in DRC remains an issue locally, especially around the villages and in overpopulated areas where people are fleeing conflicts to seek refuge. This population concentration use wood as fuel for cooking thereby leading to deforestation and soil erosion.
- Loss of biodiversity; DRC is a unique reservoir of biodiversity ranking fifth in the world for plant and animal diversity and contains more natural world heritage sites

[146] Ibid.
[147] Ibid.
[148] Conflict and Environment Observatory, How does war damage the environment? June 4th, 2020
[149] Ibid.
[150] "Democratic Republic of Congo-Environmental and Climate Change Policy Brief", June 5th 2008. Pp 2-3

than the rest of Africa combined. The conflicts have had a devastating effect on flora and fauna, leaving only a small population of elephants, gorillas (one of the world's most endangered animals), okapis and other endangered species. 8 % of the forests in DRC are protected, leaving the rest at the mercy of illegal poachers.

- Water availability and pollution; over-crowded refugee camps and villages serving as refuge for those internally displaced due to conflicts have led to a shortage of water supply in most of these communities. Pollution of water sources such as human corpses and animal carcases in ground water and streams have led to numerous outbreaks of epidemics such as cholera.[151]

The situation in DRC is no different from the other ECCAS member states that are currently being ravaged by ongoing internal conflicts. The above analysis is an analogical perspective on the environmental impacts of conflicts in the ECCAS community of states.

Overview

Data for the Sahel and west African region continues to show increased humanitarian needs. The differences between people targeted and eventual people in need continue to increase beyond projections. Especially in the period of 2019-2020 for Burkina Faso, Cameroon, CAR, Chad, DR Congo, Mali, Nigeria and Niger, the People in need per sectors continues to outgrow people targeted. Sectors like Camp Coordination and Camp Management, Early Recovery and Livelihoods, Gender Based Violence, Housing land and property, Nonfood items, water, sanitation and hygiene, multi-sectoral responses for refugees[152]

The realities and the effects of the Covid-19 pandemic on governance, rule of law, and human rights is also a major issue of interest to the work of the ECOWAS Commission[153]. A very crucial moment that demonstrate the need for interlinkages. The striking effect Covid 19 has not only left behind loss of lives, but also an impressionable impact on political governance system and economic wellbeing on most members states of ECOWAS[154] The Covid-19 brought a negation the political governance process of most members states as new drastic protocols and governance procedures were put in place. Ordinary citizenship rights as right to movement, freedom to work and earn, association were restricted, almost like imprisonment, on the basis of executive orders, necessitated by Covid-19.

The humanitarian work of ECOWAS is key in the Peace and Security Architecture of the ECOWAS, covering issues of preventing and limiting the impact of conflict and disasters, natural and man-made disaster, mixed migration, refugee protection, etc[155] ECOWAS long before Covid-19 had a humanitarian crisis, characterized by insecurity, farmers-herders conflicts, migrant smuggling and

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[151] Ibid.

[152] Humanitarian Needs Overviews, Humanitarian Response Plans, Financial Tracking Service (FTS)

[153] Interview with Dr Ajibewa Remi, Director Political Affairs, ECOWAS Commission on the 27th of November 2020

[154] Ibid.

[155] Interview with Dr Sintiki Ugbe, ECOWAS Commission's Director of Humanitarian and Social Affairs on 27th November, 2020

trafficking, droughts, IDPs, critical food insecurities and mal nutrition, climate change, flooding, vulnerable needing protection and the need for resilience. All these posed implications along socio-economic lines.

Covid-19 however, exacerbated the situation. Many were stranded, many more people needed assistance, some economic sectors suffered more, people in the rural areas with very subsistence economies increased horizontal and vertical needs in the region.[156]

Very poor social protection in the region, which is the lowest comparatively, was a key challenge. Social protection was nearly almost nonexistent. IDPs, people in informal sectors, rural areas needed more support.[157]

Increasing armed conflicts, inter community clashes, all forms of threat to peace and human security, including food insecurity, continues to deepen the humanitarian situation in Mali. Since early, 2018, there are more than 700,000 IDPs. In 2020 only, more than 287,000 people have become IDPs (August 2020 Malian factsheet). The refugee situation is also worsening, with more than 139,700 Malian refugees in neighboring countries. Mali also hosts above 43,700 refugees from Burkina Faso and Niger[158]. The Covid-19 Pandemic also dealt a deadly blow to the country's poor healthcare system, access to healthcare, food supply and education.

The number of people in need of humanitarian assistance in Mali increased from 4.3 million in January 2020 to 6.8 million in August of the same year following the revision of the Humanitarian Response Plan (HRP), representing an increase of over 58 percent. This means that the equivalent of one in three Malians is in need of humanitarian assistance.[159]

The increase in the vulnerable population is explained by the persistence of humanitarian needs linked to conflicts to which have been added those linked to the COVID-19 pandemic in a context marked by the lean period as well as the consequences of pockets of drought and seasonal flooding. Civilians continue to pay a heavy price in the conflicts, especially in the center part of the country and areas within the Liptako Gourma region. Attacks on villages, killings, kidnappings, threat and proliferation of small arms and light weapons, destruction of fields and granaries and theft of livestock are on the one hand clear violations of the rights o f civilians and on the other hand, acts which contribute to the aggravation of their vulnerability.

Regarding natural disasters, more than 26,700 people are affected by the floods in Mali, or 3,993 households. The floods resulted in 5,400 internally displaced people in the regions of Gao, Mopti, Ségou[160], Kayes, Timbuktu, Ménaka and Kidal according to data collected by state technical services. Overall, 58 percent of those affected live in the regions of Mopti and Ménaka. The material damage caused by the floods includes the destruction of 1,460 houses and over 100 tonnes of food, as well as the loss of 736 hectares of crops and over 300 herds of cattle.

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[156] Ibid.

[157] Ibid.

[158] European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations. Mali Factsheet

[159] OCHA, Central Sahel Crisis. Key Figures, as at October, 2020. See also UN News, Deputy UN Chief looks to "New Dawn for Mali", promotes participation of Women in Country's transition. 13 November, 2020.

[160] ReliefWeb, West and Central Africa: Weekly Regional Humanitarian Snapshot (1-7 September 2020) 9th September, 2020.

Gender-based violence is also increasing in Mali, but care remains very insufficient. The number of reported cases of gender-based violence (GBV) increased from 2,021 cases from January to July 2019 to 2,981 cases from January to July 2020, representing an increase of 47 percent. 99 percent of those affected are women and 36 percent of GBV is sexual violence. According to the GBV Information Management System (GBVIMS), last year 4,617 incidents were recorded, of which 97 percent of survivors were women and 45 percent were girls under 18. Absence of a specific law to respond to GBV and the weak enforcement of legal texts protecting women and girls remain the factors contributing to the increase in cases.

Long range factors fueling Malian humanitarian crisis

- Effect of climate change
- Age long tension between nomads and farmers
- Weak state systems/institutions
- Increased availability of weapons

The "Plan Cadre Integre des Nations Unies pour l'aide au development au Mali (2015-2019) (UNDAF) takes the fragility of Mali into consideration, showing the need to consolidate peace as well as recognize the UN Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission's (MINUSMA) mandate, which cuts across humanitarian support[161].

The Humanitarian Needs Overview (HNO) in Mali also includes a humanitarian-development nexus map with security as a pivot. Mali's Humanitarian Response Plan (HRP) also highlights the need for stabilization "…Security stability is essential to not only access vulnerable populations, but also to give them opportunity to rebuild their homes and to redevelop their livelihoods

Data from OCHA weekly regional humanitarian snapshot for west and central Africa for November, shows that between July to October, the number of IDPs in the Menaka region increased from 21,000 to nearly 33,000 owing to fights between non state groups and military operations in the Niger border[162].

Data from OCHA also shows that, the Northeast of Nigeria and Burkina Faso are among the world's hunger hotspots with the highest risk. The most vulnerable communities could slip into famine within months if things get worse, according to warnings from FAO and WFP as contained in the OCHA weekly report[163]. In Nigeria, between July-August alone, the 8.7 million people projected to face acute food insecurity, increased with the impacts of the Covid-19[164]

According to reports published by reliefweb, as gathered by OCHA, as at August 2020, the humanitarian situation in the Northeast Nigeria, characteristically involves a complex health

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[161] IOM's Operationalizing the Humanitarian-Development-Peace Nexus, Lessons from Colombia, Mali, Somalia and Turkey.
[162] https://weekly-wca.unocha.org
[163] https://weekly-wca.unocha.org
[164] Ibid.

emergency, devastating impacts on civilians, very poor camp conditions, challenging situations in an already insecure environment, and a future at risk[165].

The insecurities, violence and conflicts in most parts of the country, especially instigated by Boko Haram is driving massive displacement in the north eastern parts of the country, with ripple effects in Cameroon, Chad and Niger[166].

Violence, trauma, disruptions of means of livelihoods and supplies of essential products and services are threats faced by people trapped by activities of insurgents[167]

The overwhelming effects of the hosting of IDPs by already volatile communities, extreme poverty, vulnerabilities to natural hazards and pre-existing inter-communal conflicts. This was the situation of things that the Covid-19 Pandemic met.

The 2015 Humanitarian Needs Overview of Nigeria, prepared on behalf of the Humanitarian Country Team, pointed out the following key humanitarian issues[168]:

- Massive conflicts displacements and violations against civilians
- Crisis-level food insecurity especially in the north-east
- Severe constrain on access to basic services
- Near exhaustion of resources of host communities
- Acute health and nutritional needs especially in areas with little humanitarian access

Underlying issues as that also shows the interlinkages of the four pillars, according to the Humanitarian Needs Overview:

Severe underdevelopment: Nigeria over a long period of time has ranked poorly in the UNDP HDI rankings. Reports from the World Bank also shows that; over 70 per cent of the country's 180 million people live on less than USD$1 per day.

This is even far worse in the North eastern states, driven by the Boko Haram insurgency. National surveys in 2013 and 2014 have shown the Northeast Region sitting at or near the bottom of States in terms of key indicators related to Water and Sanitation, maternal health, and nutrition[169].

High degree of vulnerability to natural hazards: Nigeria has also been hit by a number of devastating flooding induced by both man-made and natural forces. In July and October 2012 devastating floods affected vast populations around the river Benue and Niger and their tributaries across 33 of the country's 36 states leaving an estimated 2 million people temporarily displaced[170]. The Northeast region's states were both directly affected; Bauchi and Taraba, in particular, hosted

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[165] Reliefweb News and Press Release, Five things you need to know about the humanitarian situation in north-east Nigeria. 12 August, 2020
[166] Highlights of the impacts of humanitarian crisis, from the 2015 Humanitarian Needs Overview
[167] Ibid
[168] Reliefweb, Nigeria 2015 Humanitarian Needs Overview: Nigeria, December 2014. 23 Marc, 2015
[169] Ibid
[170] Ibid

some of these displaced. Three years later, many of these IDPs had not recovered and were still experiencing post-disaster needs from protracted displacement.[171]

Long standing inter-communal violence and resource disputes: As highlighted earlier in the conflicts session, conflicts between farmers and herders are widespread in the 'Middle Belt' and Northeast Region.

In 2020, the Boko Haram insurgency, with its fractional ISWAP, growing banditry and armed killings in the Northwest (Kaduna, Kebbi, Katsina and Zamfara), sustained farmer herder clashes in the middle belts plus a growing Cameroonian refugee population up south (Akwa Ibom, Benue, Cross River etc) continued to feature in the humanitarian picture of Nigeria[172]. ACAPS[173] report also shows very high crisis severity, very high impact, very high humanitarian conditions, very high complexity, and very high access constraints.

In Cameroon, continued violence in the North-West and South-West Regions resulted in increased abuses against civilians, forced displacements and hampered humanitarian access. By April 2020, more than 679,000 people had been displaced and faced significant protection risks in those two regions. An additional 58,000 people had sought refuge in Nigeria. High rates of sexual and gender-based violence went unaddressed in the face of limited capacity to respond. More than one third of the health facilities were seriously affected, disrupting immunization, measles prevention and other essential treatments, including critical sexual and reproductive health services for women. While school attendance had improved throughout the last quarter of 2019, more than 70 per cent of children in the North-West and South-West Regions were still out of school. Over 80 per cent of health and education services in the two regions were not functioning. As at 31 March 2020, Cameroon was hosting more than 384,000 refugees and asylum seekers, including over 272,000 refugees from the Central African Republic. The country also had almost 977,000 internally displaced people and over 354,000 returnees, mainly in the North-West, South-West and Far North Regions.[174]

The feel from survey investigations shows some appreciable efforts in terms of humanitarian support services in the west and central African subregions. As shown clearly in the survey results attached in the annex, more respondents, a little above 50% consider humanitarian support services to be ineffective in the west and central African subregions. While 40.9% think its is effective.

5.3   Four Pillar Interlinkages: Opportunities and Challenges

The interlinkages among the four pillars, are best interrogated at all levels, national, subregions, Regional Economic Communities, and the international level. The interlinkages would also be

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[171] Ibid.

[172] ACAPS Nigeria country report, www.acaps.org

[173] An independent information provider, enabling crisis responders to better understand how to address the world's disasters

[174] Humanitarian Response Plan Cameroon. (Humanitarian Programme Cycle, 2020) issued June, 2020

looked at up-down, down-up, vertically and horizontally. This would also afford the opportunity to see the associated **challenges** and **opportunities**.

Peace and Security; The case studies picked from the subregions, show consistency in the outplay of the following and the interlinked nature of the issue of peace and security amongst states in the west and central African subregions:

- Challenges of Governance (leadership and systems/institutions);
- Questionable political and electoral processes, notably with the constant amendment of constitutional provisions to maintain a firm grip on power for as long as possible;
- Failures of political parties and their roles;
- Terroristic and non-states actors led activities especially Boko Haram and others;
- Resource exploration-related issues; or natural resources, environmental changes
- Ethnic differences and lack of cohesion;
- Ineffective border management and illicit dealings.[175]

These issues affecting peace and security are not only peculiar to peace and security, but also to the other pillars. Their negative impacts affect the other pillars directly. So also, the tendency for a positive turn-around effect. Their cross-cutting commonality across the subregions also show interlinkages of the nature of the resultant problems in peace and security and the other pillars. It is such that no pillar stands alone. In effect about solutions, should be done from a holistic perspective. To a large extent, synergistic frameworks and strategies would be useful for the various states and subregions.

For human rights; the case studies portray the following violations. These issues spilling over to the other pillars, show that, just as the problems are interlinked, in same way, efforts aimed at addressing the pillars are also best interlinked.

- Failure on the part of governance (disregard for democratic tenets as rule of law and human rights, constitutionalism, corruption, poor justice system and lack of judicial independence);
- Failure to comply with regional and international human right principles;
- Effects of conflicts caused by both man-made and environmental factors;
- Intimidation and repression of citizens especially by state authorities;
- Violation of rights to peaceful assembly;
- Violation of housing rights due to huge numbers of internal displacements as a result of raging conflicts and burning of villages;
- Sexual and gender-based abuses, notably systematic rapes occurring in conflict areas;
- Threat to religious freedoms such as the killing of Christians especially by Boko Haram extremists and ISIS-WA;
- Threat to political freedoms with respect to the arbitrary arrests and illegal detention of political rivals;

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[175] According to ECCAS Commissioner Yvette Ngandu, 64% of central African borders are not demarcated hence accentuating conflicts. The problem is similar in west Africa.

- Denial of access to critical services, especially education and economic empowerment;
- Oppression of vocal voices against repressive state policies, such as oppositions and media.

For the humanitarian pillar; the case studies reveal the following issues, which also plays out in all the other pillars: Addressing these issues would be directly enhancing the performance of the pillars.

- Governance, institutions and corruption;
- Governance and political interest resulting in inefficiencies;
- Gender and youth issues such as inequalities;
- Increasing violence/conflicts compounded by the COVID-19 and resultant humanitarian challenges;
- Food insecurity;
- Ever increasing numbers of internally displaced persons;
- Natural and man-made disasters including those caused by climate change.

For the Development pillar, the case studies reveal the following regular patterns;

- High opportunity costs of conflict, violence on development;
- Slow economic/growth rates;
- Weak social-cultural aspect of development;
- Lapses in political aspects of development, including elections and political participation;
- High costs with respect to the cumulative effects of failure in addressing the other pillars, as peace and security, human rights, humanitarianism;
- Costs of mitigating the effects of development on other pillars affects prospects and resources available for driving initiatives for sustainable development;
- State fragility or failures;
- Availability of incentives for promotion of the role of the private sector and investment in development, through inclusive and innovative economic growth.

The aforementioned interlinkages, show that a comprehensive and complementary approach in dealing with issues of peace and security, human rights and the rule of law, humanitarianism and development would go a long way to prevent conflicts. These issues must be treated as inter-related and not isolated, because[176]:

1. The causes or fuels for each pillar are not contained or limited to the particular pillar. For example, the causes of humanitarian challenges are not caused by humanitarian issues

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[176] Interviews with AUC-DPA, Rita Amukhobu on November 30, 2020 and ECCAS Commissioner Gradiva Yvette Ngandu, December 11, 2020.

alone, but are fueled by failures in the development, human rights and peace and security pillars;

2. By the implication of 1 above, the solutions to addressing challenges of each pillar, does not rest on the particular pillar itself, but are domiciled in the other pillars;

3. Addressing one of the particular pillars would most likely lead to the resolution of another; This in the long run, will facilitate conflict resolution in that, all conflict related issues are handled simultaneously, leaving no vacuum to accommodate dissatisfaction and possible rising tensions;

4. Opportunity of transferring of experience, innovation and solutions, used in one pillar, in addressing the other pillars, would be possible interlinkages orientation. This could be an easy win-win for the actors in the field.

Towards a human rights approach to interlinkages

A very efficient argument or approach to interlinkages, is to first address all the lacunas around human rights, such as independence of relevant institutions from government influence, judicial corruption, addressing cases of human rights violations ensuring that perpetrators are served with justice. This is a first step towards guaranteeing the rule of law which in turn, secures the very scarce trust in the justice system and governance which will in turn reduce tensions and conflicts as well as resultant humanitarian actions. At the endpoint, development is stalled, because valuable resources meant for sustainable development are expended in ending conflicts and addressing the unavoidable humanitarian spillover effects.

The place of human rights abuses in the causes, dynamics, and consequences of conflicts further shows the importance of a human rights approach to conflict resolution. If human rights are part of the problem, they must be part of the solution[177]. Violence and conflicts undermine sustainable development. Human rights violations are at the root causes of conflict and insecurity which, in turn, invariably result in further violations of human rights. As such, action to protect and promote human rights has inherent preventive power while rights-based approaches to peace and security bring this power to efforts for sustainable peace. The human rights normative framework also provides a sound basis for addressing issues of serious concern within or between countries that, if left unaddressed, may lead to conflict[178].

Failure to adhere to international human rights standards and protect human rights weakens peace-making, peacekeeping and peace-building efforts.[179] Global efforts to counter terrorism and prevent the spread of violent extremism suffer from this failure. The UN's renewed focus on

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[177] Claudia Fuentes-Julio and Raslan Ibrahim,"A Human Rights Approach to Conflict Resolution", Ethics and International Affairs, Carnegie Council, September 2019. Available at https://www.ethicsandinternationalaffairs.org/2019/a-human-rights-approach-to-conflict-resolution.

[178] "Preventing violations and strengthening protection of human rights, including in situations of conflict and insecurity", United Nations Human Rights, Office of the High Commissioner. Available at https://www.ohchr.org/EN/AboutUs/ManagementPlan/Pages/preventing-violations.aspx. Accessed 22/10/2020

[179] Ibid.

prevention and sustaining peace is key to advancing sustainable development. We can help to sustain both peace and development by showing how applying human rights norms can address grievances, reduce inequality and build resilience[180].

The human rights pillar also addresses potential threats posed by new technologies in a security context. All pointers clearly show that the governance of the digital space is becoming very imperative. With the new waves of porosity of the social media, spread of fake news, malicious and inflammable information, threatening peace and security, many governments in Africa are taking to stiff governance of the internet space. However, it is important that this is done with great sense of responsibility from the government without trampling on human rights and the rule of law, to prevent a negative backlash.

The UN continues to emphasize the need for "Parties to conflict and actors involved in peace operations to increasingly comply with international human rights and humanitarian law and provide greater protection to civilians".

"We will monitor human rights violations committed during armed conflicts, including civilian casualties and incidents of sexual and gender-based violence; bring facts and evidence to the parties' and public attention, and advocate for changes in policy, practice and conduct; provide training and technical advice to integrate international human rights and humanitarian law in military and peace operations; strategically engage with parties to conflicts to reduce human rights violations and integrate human rights in political decision making and peace agreements; facilitate the participation of diverse groups, including women, in peace negotiations; and cooperate closely with regional and UN peace missions to ensure integration of human rights."[181]

The 2018-2021 efforts include[182]:

- Efforts to counter terrorism and prevent violent extremism non-compliance with international law;
- Strategies to prevent and respond to conflict consistently and integrate human rights protection;
- Justice mechanisms, including for transitional justice, provision of increased accountability for conflict-related violations;
- Human rights information and analyses are integrated in early warning and analysis systems and influence international and national policy-making, strategies and operations to prevent, mitigate or respond to emerging crises, including humanitarian crises and conflict;
- United Nations' support to national and regional security forces, law enforcement agencies, and non-state actors integrates human rights and complies with the human rights due diligence policy;

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[180] Ibid.

[181] "Preventing violations and strengthening protection of human rights, including in situations of conflict and insecurity", United Nations Human Rights, Office of the High Commissioner. Available at https://www.ohchr.org/EN/AboutUs/ManagementPlan/Pages/preventing-violations.aspx. Accessed 22/10/2020

[182] Ibid.

- The use of private military and security companies, and the development and deployment of new technologies, weapons and tactics, are increasingly consistent with and respect international human rights law and international humanitarian law.

With respect to peace and security; In light of the above discussions, expanding the operations of regional early warning and conflict prevention instruments, implementing the "silencing the guns" and building more resilience is very important.

Conflict prevention presents a far more cost- and resource-effective way to ensure peace and security than conflict resolution or management. The relevance of regional cooperation and efforts for anticipating violence and preventing instability and insecurity is particularly evident in West and Central Africa. This risk of spillover violence due to often poorly controlled and permeable borders and uncontrolled flow of armed elements and weapons is often increased by the direct or indirect involvement of governments in conflicts in their neighborhoods: by having rebel movements use their poorly policed borderlands as rear bases, by tolerating the presence on their territory of armed groups or insurgents, by financially or logistically supporting one of the belligerent parties, or by sending their own armed forces to influence and take part in the fighting. Finally, the Great Lakes conflicts clearly demonstrate how the flow of refugees can lead to the emergence of new conflict actors, further fuel the cycle of violence and contribute to the regional spreading and expansion of violence across national borders. In this regard, the influx of refugees into certain communities increases tension between the indigenes and refugees, which can further lead to violence between these two communities. An example is competition for wood which is used for cooking, portable water etc[183].

The Breach of security and peace can be caused by:

- **Questionable electoral processes leading to electoral violence.** Electoral violence can be defined as acts or threats of coercion, intimidation or physical harm perpetrated to affect an electoral process or that arises in the context of electoral competition. When perpetrated to affect an electoral process, violence may be employed to influence the process of elections — such as efforts to delay, disrupt, or derail a poll and to influence the outcomes: the determining of winners in competitive races for political office or to secure approval or disapproval of referendum questions. Electoral violence is a subtype of political violence, but distinguished by its timing (close to elections) and its goals (to impact elections, either by changing outcomes or to disrupt the elections themselves). Electoral violence can be physical violence, but can also include threats and intimidation. Electoral violence can be aimed against people (candidates, voters, electoral officials) or objects (for example, ballots or electoral facilities).[184]

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[183]Sara Karimbhoy, "The challenges of emergency response in Cameroon's Far North: humanitarian response in a mixed IDP/refugee setting". Available at https://odihpn.org/magazine/the-challenges-of-emergency-response-in-cameroons-far-north-humanitarian-response-in-a-mixed-idprefugee-setting/.

[184] European Commission United Nations Development Programme, Joint Task Force on Electoral Assistance. Thematic Workshop on Elections, Violence, and Conflict Prevention. Barcelona, Spain. June 20-24 2011. Available at http://aceproject.org/electoral-advice/archive/questions/replies/190117228/266390805/Elections-Violence-and-Conflict-Prevention.pdf.

- **Terrorist activities against Boko Haram and ISIS-WA;** in order to resolve conflicts and build sustainable peace, it is necessary to combat the activities of terrorist organizations operating in the Lake Chad Basin and in other CEMAC and ECCAS member states. This can be seen through the numerous initiatives undertaken by ECCAS member states and CEMAC member states to fight against terrorism and related activities in the sub-region.
- **Resolving ethnic differences**; underlying all the above priority issues that could lead to conflict, are the identities of the various groups, either ethnic or religious identities, or related to their status as refugees or host communities. The conflicts between refugee and host communities were usually over resources such as water points or firewood[185].

With respect to humanitarianism;

The interlinkages can also be maximized from a humanitarian view point. First, it is important to situate this in line with the Agenda 2063, which seeks a holistic approach to development. In this case, humanitarianism revolves inside a triangular mandate that has governance, peace and security and development. It is the lapses in these three key issues that fuels humanitarian crisis. Same way humanitarian crisis is mitigated when the three do not fail. However, there is also the case of humanitarian concerns not caused by the failure of man and governance. There is the need to develop the capacity to envisage such and react to them in mitigating or reducing the extent of damage.

Most humanitarian crisis in the west and central African subregions, especially very recently as induced by the Covid-19 pandemic are reflective of poor governance and related issues. The poor system for early warnings, and for resilience, the existing poor state of healthcare, the almost complete lack of social protection or fall for the most vulnerable, poor data governance and social register amongst other issues that could be addressed by policy actions by government and responsible interactions with institutions, continues to expand humanitarian burdens in the west and central African subregions.

We cannot overemphasize the fact that implementation of the interlinkages, requires the support of the situational foundation of governance, institutions, resources and other cross-cutting issues. Challenges in implementing interlinkages also commonly derives from inadequacies around these issues. For example, issues around governance and politics if not well addressed, could be threat to advancing the humanitarian pillar. The humanitarian pillar works on principles clearly different from the nature of political principles and interests for most member states in the west and central African subregions. Same way, governance and politics wields very strong influence on peace and security. This also goes in line with the effectiveness of institutions especially Civil Society Organizations (CSOs).

Some Strategies for promoting interlinkages of the four pillars includes:

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[185] Catholic Relief services, "Social Cohesion Analysis, Cameroon:, available at https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/social-cohesion-analysis-cameroon.pdf.

- Promoting AU reforms that promotes the Agenda 2063. The Agenda 2063 serves a lot as the African Peer Review Mechanism's (APRM) blue print for the interlinkages[186].
- Promoting the national level ownership and proper contextualization of the processes of implementing the pillars. The work of regional and international organizations should promote this
- Adopting the use of joint missions
- Ensuring Adherence to legislations especially international legislations on the various pillars.
- Ensuring regulations and accountability
- Building responsible institutions
- Domestication of SDGS at national levels
- Digitalization of governance and adequate data management/administration
- Organizing disaster frameworks for mitigating shocks, through better coordination.

6. IMPORT OF SITUATIONAL FOUNDATION TO INTERLINKAGES

6.1 Governance

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[186] Interview with Sara Hamouda, Officer in charge of the Agenda 2063 Unit and SDGS and South-South Cooperation of the African Peer Review Mechanism on 25th November, 2020

Governance is simply the exercise of political, economic and administrative authority to manage a country's affairs. The AUC, through its African Governance Architecture as well as the APRM arrangement have emphasized the importance of governance. Also, the broad definition of OSAA's work as part of the UN's partnership with the AU on the peace-security-development relationship, underscores the interconnections between peace, security, development, governance and human rights as crucial for the achievement of inclusive and sustainable development in Africa.

Many international yardsticks for measuring progress in governance, show a sustained poor performance of governance on different interrelated issues with respect to countries in west and central Africa. Using such yardsticks as the fragile or failed State Index rankings, the Corruption Perception Index, the global terrorism index, and the Mo Ibrahim Index, the extent of the challenges of governance in west and central Africa is clear. The "Ibrahim Index for African Governance", measures anti-corruption innovations, protection of civil liberties and environmental protection and reflects countries like Somalia, Democratic Republic of Congo, Sudan, Angola, Central African Republic, Ivory Coast, Eritrea, Guinea-Conakry and Nigeria as countries showing the poorest indicators[187]. In the period of 2010-2019, the report showed that more than 60% of Africans live in countries that made progress in good governance. This progress has gone down in the last five years, even before the effect of coronavirus pandemic. The fall in progress in governance is linked to increasingly dangerous environment for human rights and civic participation and worsening security situation. For instance, Guinea and Ivory Coast in West Africa, saw constitutional tenure elongations that were accompanied by political crises that led to deaths[188].

The Agenda 2063, which is a holistic approach to development for Africa, cannot be achieved without addressing governance. Governance is very key in achieving development, peace and security, human rights with humanitarianism cross-cutting in between[189]. Governance challenges in Africa, revolve around deficiencies in leadership (lack of visionary and transformative leadership) and systems (lack of strong independent institutions). This weakness in governance affects human rights, peace and security with dissatisfaction leading to mass actions, restlessness etc.[190]

The Covid-19 also raised the concerns of funding, corruption and integrity and transparency in governance in most member states. A perfect example, was the aftermath of the #EndSARS protest, which showed how Covid-19 relief items, meant to alleviate the sufferings of the people during the forced lockdowns, were kept in warehouses for private appropriations by politicians. There was also the revealed weakness in the management of the health sector in member states.

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[187] Variables such as: politics (Government effectiveness, rule of law, transparency and accountability, corruption control, types of freedom, etc.); security (political stability, recurrence of conflicts, incidence of coups d'état or human rights violations); economics (GDP per capita,
inequality index, inflation, etc.); and socio-economic factors (infant mortality rate, literacy, malnutrition or access to drinking water etc are used..

[188] Africanews, African countries not progressing in good governance- report. 17 November, 2020

[189] Interview with AUC-DPA Rita Amukhobu on November 30, 2020

[190] Ibid.

ECOWAS supported members state in conducting Corrupt Risk Assessment (CRA) of their health sector[191].

In Nigeria, issues of human rights abuse, state accomplice in crime and genocide surrounded the recent #EndSARS protest as youths took to the streets demanding the disbanding of a notorious police group amidst other police reforms. The ugly development of Lekki Toll Gate shooting of 20.10.2020 led to other chain of events that saw massive looting and violence across the country. The looting further deepened the distrust for the government, with the discovery of hidden Covid-19 relief palliatives donated by private individuals, businesses and international donations. Even though the military and other state agencies have denied ordering the shooting, dismissing it as fake news, Amnesty International's investigation and video footages and a recent CNN report have provided evidence that the Nigerian army fired life arms on flag-bearing peaceful, armless protesters[192]

Deficit in Governance- affects all four pillars in West and Central Africa

Undoubtedly, internal politics, regional power-plays, and bad governance holds a very strong place in the multiplicity of challenges especially insecurity in West Africa. Despite being rich with human and material endowment, the region remains one of the poorest and retarded in the world for reasons related mainly to a dearth of leadership and poor political and resource governance capacity[193]

The popular depiction of the Sahel as "ungoverned spaces" in literatures underlines not only the deficit of governance and its institutions, but also the complex nature of challenges, including external dynamics at play in the Sahel. The term is intended to refer to both physical territory and non-physical policy space in which there is an absence of effective state sovereignty and control[194]

Empirical data from conflict zones in West Africa speak unequivocally to the correlation between bad governance and political instability[195]. For most of West African states, political leadership, has been more of a direct or indirect circulation within the military class. The effect slides a bit differently for west African states. According to the IPI Working Paper on Governance and Security in West Africa,

> for Liberia, Sierra Leone, and Guinea-Bissau, governance became synonymous with the imposition of a "violent peace" characterized by institutional corruption and greed, zero infrastructure development, hatred and discrimination along ethnic lines, as well as the alienation and consequent disillusionment of the youth. These factors combined to undermine the integrity of the state, sparking violent conflicts whose effects

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[191] Interview with Dr Ajibewa Remi, Director Political Affairs, ECOWAS Commission on the 27th of November 2020

[192] Amnesty International, Nigeria: Killings of #EndSARS protesters by the military must be investigated. 21. October, 2020

[193] UNDP, *Human Development Report 2007/2008: Fighting Climate Change—Human Solidarity in a Divided World* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007).

[194] Piombo, 2007 https://stabilityjournal.org/articles/10.5334/sta.bs/print/#B43
Hazen, 2010, https://stabilityjournal.org/articles/10.5334/sta.bs/print/#B24

[195] Abdel-Fatau Musah, West Africa: Governance and Security in a Changing Region Africa Program Working Paper Series. International Peace Institute. February, 2009. P.4

reverberated across the region. The erosion of state institutions and infrastructure in turn led to the collapse of the formal economy and the rise of the shadow state in which warlordism, impunity, and criminality flourished[196]

Challenges to bad governance from below provoked instability first in Benin and Mali, and later, civil wars that ravaged much of the MRU basin, Guinea-Bissau, and Côte d'Ivoire. These wars exposed the soft underbelly of the security apparatuses of the repressive regimes as, for the first time, civilian warlords, militants, and mercenaries became a serious factor threatening the very survival of the region's hitherto state centric security apparatuses.[197]

Furthermore, governance or political leadership in the region like for most of Africa, thrives on deliberately exploiting weaknesses or faulty lines in the history, constitution, system and ethno-religious composition of the people for sustained selfish political and economic gains. The outcome has been near total failure of institutions and infrastructure accompanied by a general failure with respect to human security, including egregious violations of human rights.

Save for very few cases that are recording some good progress by reason of good leadership, effective management of resources and relatively credible electoral systems, governance for most African states are ineffective, corrupt electoral systems, despotic and dictatorial. There is need for a rescue of governance in most of Africa, in other to evolve strong and responsible institutions[198].

Faulty and corrupted Democracy or One party-system style dictatorships with Kings disguising as Democracies

Most of the states in west Africa, practice very retarding and corrupt style of democracy. There is every trappings of dictatorship and/or monarchy under the cloak of resource wasting double chamber practicing democracies. The near completely one dominant party system, corrupt political parties with no ideologies, incessant political party defections, not much could be expected as dividend of democracy as seen in other parts of the world. For example, in democracies, peaceful protests are very much part of the system. In fact, the state police has the responsibility of protecting peaceful protesters[199]. The reverse is the case in Nigeria, during the recent #EndSARS protests. From indication of government use of criminal elements to clamp down, use of tact, divide and rule, use of all institutions including the CBN and commercial banks to clamp down on peaceful protesters is not reflective of democracies. In the wake of the revelations made possible through social media, the Nigerian government is doing all within her reach to clamp down and regulate social media, after almost succeeding in silencing all regular press media. The body language of the president in his much expected speech following the unpleasant trail of events that followed the Lekki Toll Gate shootings and nationwide lootings and discovery of palliatives did

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[196] Ibid.

[197] Ibid.

[198]Richard Odusanya, Docpet Info, Leadership Failure in Africa: A Classic example of Failed Leadership and Weak Institutions. 5/12/2020

[199] The right of peaceful protest is enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, adopted by the United Nations in December 10, 1948. See also, BBC News, Hong Kong protests: Huge crowds rally peacefully. 19 August, 2019.

not help to suggest that he retired from the Nigerian Army. In her CNN interview, Obianuju Catherine, also known as DJ Switch an eye witness of the Lekki shootings, through whose broadcast live videos went viral, said "Nigeria is a dictatorship with a democratic face"[200]

Nigeria's leadership in ECOWAS and AU, continues to fail to reflect or make sense when compared with her domestic leadership deficit back home. Despite her place as one of the leading producer of oil in the world, Nigeria continues to exhibit the worst income disparities in the region, with only 1 percent of the elites controlling 80 percent of accrued oil wealth, almost 70 percent of which is held in foreign banks, while close to 80 percent of the population live below the UN designated poverty threshold of $1 per day[201]

The African Union (AU) has charted a number of initiatives to support governance and democratization in Africa. The African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM) allows countries voluntarily undergo a process of self-assessment on four main pillar issues:

- Democracy and political governance;
- Economic governance and management,
- Corporate governance, and
- Socio-economic development.

The African Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance, adopted by the AU in January 2007, seeks to further the commitment of member States to democratic principles, elections, the rule of the law and the respect for human rights[202]

6.2 Corruption

We have consistently touched on corruption as a recurring challenge in the conflicts and threats to progress on the four pillars. Corruption in multiple forms and levels is one of the major issues that can hold up human development and security. Corruption usually hampers the development strategies, making the associated strategies ineffective in reaching the desired national goals optimally. It is believed that in the presence of corruption a nation is always likely to be below par in attaining its economic, social and environmental developments. Thus, investigation of the impacts of corruption on the multi-dimensional macroeconomic indicators of development has

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[200] #EndSARS: "Nigeria is a dictatorship with a democratic face"—DJ Switch. November 18, 2020.

[201] See Jerome Afeikhena, "Managing Oil Rent for Sustainable Development and Poverty Reduction in Africa," paper presented at the UNU-WIDER Jubilee Conference, "Thinking Ahead: The Future of Development Economics," Helsinki, June 17-18, 2005, available at http://website1.wider.unu.edu/conference/conference-2005-3/conference-2005-3-papers/Jerome.pdf.

[202] AFRICAN CHARTER ON DEMOCRACY, ELECTIONS AND GOVERNANCE, in: http://www.africa-union.org/root/AU/Documents/Treaties/text/Charter%20on%20 Democracy.pdf

always been a crucial area of research amongst economists and policymakers worldwide[203]. Reinikka and Smith (2004) portrayed a negative relationship between corruption and economic development by asserting that rising corruption rates severely dampens national incomes in economies[204]. Likewise, corruption when reduced could result in a boost of societal development. According to Gupta et al. (2000),[205] curbing the rates of corruption within an economy can lead to social development in the form of lower child and infant mortality rates and reduced the percentage of babies with low birth-weights as well as ensure declined number of school dropouts. On the other hand, an increase in corruption in a nation adversely impacts the SDGs of the country.

For most states in West and Central Africa, corruption of various kinds are being institutionalized. People are becoming rather comfortable with corruption. There is almost a near lack of abhorrence for corruption anymore from the followership[206].

Corruption affects the ECOWAS and ECCAS subregions with serious implications on peace and security, development, human rights as well as humanitarian works in the region, especially in societies beset by deep poverty and high level of unemployment. It affects trust in governance and security[207]

Corruption also constitutes a threat to peace building in the west and central subregions, as much as it plays on human rights. This has seen the bounce back effects in protests and mass actions as being witnessed these days[208]. Corruption equally adversely impacts humanitarianism when it comes to delivery of support and/or building resilience as well as disaster risks preparedness.

The ECOWAS Commission has put in place a number of frameworks and structures to address the issue of corruption. Preventive approaches, whistle blower policies, Corrupt Risk Assessment (CRA) and working with national anti-corruption bodies of member states.

6.3 The dynamics of Institutions

The successful national level implementation of the interlinkages of the four pillars of development, peace and security, human rights and humanitarianism, depends a lot on the level of

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[203] Muntasir Murshed, "Impacts of Corruption on Sustainable Development: A Simultaneous Equations Model Estimation Approach" Available at
https://www.researchgate.net/publication/324606339_Impacts_of_Corruption_on_Sustainable_Development_A_Simultaneous_Equations_Model_Estimation_Approach#:~:text=Corruption%20is%20perceived%20to%20be,development%20all%20around%20the%20globe.&text=In%20light%20of%20the%20estimated,Asian%2C%20African%20and%20LAC%20subpanels. Accessed 23/10/2020.

[204] 'Public Expenditure Tracking Surveys in Education', UNESCO International Institute for Educational Planning, Paris, Cited in Muntasir Murshed, supra, page 3.

[205] Gupta, S, Davoodi, H and Tiongson, E 2000, 'Corruption and Provision of Health Care and Education Services', IMF Working Paper No. 116., Cited in Muntasir Murshed, supra.

[206] Babafemi Badejo, Towards Abhorrence for Corruption in a New Nigeria. Presentation at Magodo Associate Symposium "Nigeria which Way Forward" May 3, 2018

[207] Interviews with ECCAS & ECOWAS Senior Officials

[208] Ibid.

commitment at the level of government and institutions. The institutional capacities and how appropriate and functional these institutional arrangements are, is very critical.

Democratic Institutions;

Good governance has often been brought up in debates surrounding sustainable development. Good governance is widely considered to be strongly normative, and an in itself ambiguous and a contested concept. As championed by the World Bank, the concept includes "accountability, transparency, rule of law and government efficiency and effectiveness"[209] and was seen as decisive for a country's development. Particularly prominent in the good governance debate is the discussion about democratic institutions.[210] Influenced by the New Institutional Economics, institutions are understood as informal and formal "rules of the game".[211] Primary functions attributed to institutions are the facilitation of collective action and the reduction of transaction costs. Further, it is suggested that it is not the mere establishment of institutions that matters for development, but the public perceptions about their credibility[212].

Although the definition of democratic institutions differ, many agree that freedom of expression, free, fair and inclusive elections, rule of law, effective legislatures, checks and balances, alternative information, respect for civil liberties and human rights and an independent judiciary belong to this category. Democratic theory provides valuable insights regarding the relationship between democratic institutions and development. Thus, legitimate governance should be based on the will of the people. Accordingly, we expect that democratic institutions foster progress towards achieving the SDGs by ensuring accountability and transparency in the political process.[213]

Capacity building for leadership development and efficiency, is one very critical roles of institutions We shall examine these institutions (public institutions, CSOs, religious institutions and the private sectors) and how they can support progress in the work for the interlinkages, and are failing.

Political parties

The world over, political parties are the main instruments for organizing political representation, democratically healthy political contests, and democratic accountability. Political parties serve as a bridge between the State and civil society; thus they play a very critical role in public policy engineering, political recruitment and guiding the nature of political changes and key decisions. Regrettably, this has not been the case with most of African democracies. Political parties are

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[209] Nicole Maldonado, The World Bank's Evolving Concept of Good Governance and its impact on human Rights. Doctoral workshop on development and international organizations. Stockholm, Sweden, May 2010

[210] Lisa-Maria and Jens Newig, Governance for achieving the Sustainable Development Goals: How important are participation, policy coherence, reflexivity, adaptation and democratic institutions? In Earth System Governance. Vol 2, April 2019, 100031

[211] Ibid.

[212] Government at a Glance 2013, Trust in Government, Policy Effectiveness and the Goverance Agenda. OECD 2013.

[213] Ibid.

weak, corrupt and play only little or no role in consolidating democracy and the deepening of governance.[214] In as much as they remain the basis for leadership recruitment, political parties will always be very relevant for progressive achievements when one adopts synergistic efforts on the basis of the four-pillar interlinkages.

Private Sector/Civil Society Organizations: The role of public institutions is very critical for the interlinkages. This is true because, government and state actors have political and legal limitations that restrain them from effectively addressing some conflicts and engaging with all conflict stakeholders[215]. In such cases, non-state or government actors cutting across actors in the international private diplomatic actors and local civil society organizations.[216]. Civil society should not only continue to play the age long watchdogs role over security allied polices/programs of national, regional and continental authorities, but also its engagement will also be seen as a measure of public approval of security related activities including security sector reform".[217]

CSOs are important when one examines the provisions of the AU Constitutive Act, Protocol Relating to the Establishment of the Peace and Security Council of the African Union and the Post Conflict Reconstruction and Development Policy (PCRDP). According to the framework document, the role of CSOs in Security Sector Reform includes:

a. the promotion of dialogue among the different sectors of society on security issues as a confidence-building measure; b. active participation in the formulation, monitoring and evaluation of security sector policies and legislation; c. the promotion of peace, security and stability in Africa; d. the promotion and defense of a culture of good governance, democratic principles, participation, human rights and freedoms as well as social justice in the security sector; e. the promotion and defense of best practices in the security sector; f. conducting research and providing training on security related issues; g. Advocacy and awareness-raising on security related issues, particularly on security budget analysis, and monitoring and evaluation of security policy and practice, and h. the promotion of the implementation of this policy at national, regional and continental levels[218].

A number of CSOs that have been working in the West and Central African regions in spite of all challenges, have remained relentless in the struggles against dictatorship and bad governance and continue to lead the processes to strengthen human security[219]. Such CSOs in Nigeria as Civil Society Legislative Advocacy Centre (CISLAC), Centre for Democracy Development, (CDD),

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[214] Aliyu, M Kolawole, Adeowu, A. Wasiu, et al., "Political Parties as Instrument of Deepening Good Governance in Nigeria," in Research on Humanities and Social Sciences. Vol 8, No.4, 2018. P.80

[215] Roxana Cristescu "Engaging with civil society in conflict areas – the role of international organisations Conference European perspectives in the context of Eastern Partnership" Yerevan, 2010. Available at https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/Full_Report_1854.pdf, accessed 23/10/2020.

[216] Roxana Cristescu "Engaging with civil society in conflict areas – the role of international organisations Conference European perspectives in the context of Eastern Partnership" Yerevan, 2010. Available at https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/Full_Report_1854.pdf, accessed 23/10/2020.

[217] Dr Niagalé Bagayoko, et al Baseline Study of the State of Play of Security Sector Governance and the Inclusion of Civil Society in Security Sector Reform Processes in Nigeria, Mali, Cameroon and Wider ECOWAS/ECCAS Region. In Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung Peace and Security, 2020. P.17

[218] Ibid.

[219] Abdel-Fatau Musah, West Africa: Governance and Security in a Changing Region Africa Program Working Paper Series. International Peace Institute. February, 2009. P.14

Socio-Economic Rights And Accountability Project (SERAP), Action on African Women Foundation, (AAWF) Ghana, Actions Communautaires pour le developpement integral (ACDI) DR Congo, Center for Development Support Initiatives (CEDSI), Human Rights Justice and Peace, Policy and Legal Advocacy Centre, international ones as Amnesty International, Transparency International have continued to speak up.

The activities of organized civil society organizations in West Africa, especially in Nigeria, to make any significant impact in the struggle for better governance, democracy and accountability is not without links to leadership and corruption. First of all, there is a fundamental issue with the practice of leadership in the subregions. Such that leadership is not considered as service for the good of many, but for the interest of a few. Well-meaning individuals and groups seeking to demand have often been bought over or silenced by the government. This was the reason why the #EndSARS protesters refused to put forward "regular sit-on the negotiation table" kind of leaders. This was also the reason for the success recorded by the #EndSARS movement especially in their management and organization.

In most of Africa, just like it is very easy for the three levels of government to agree on corruption, there is a strong connection between the private sectors, civil societies and the governments, such that the private sectors and the civil societies becomes accomplices of the government.

In Cameroon for instance, many international organizations and NGOs were described as being actors for peace, and interviewees felt that refugees and host communities alike would be in a much worse condition without these actors.[220] Beyond response to such urgent humanitarian needs as shelter and or food security, many NGOs like the Center for Human Rights and Democracy of Africa, PLAN, Première Urgence, ACF, and CARE have supported in work for the management of conflict and advancing the capacity of youth and gender social cohesion and inclusion.[221]

In some countries especially in central Africa, activities of Association of Women, Religious groups, local traditional authorities, Unions and interest groups are also recognized.

6.4 EXTERNAL DYNAMICS

Terrorism/Terror Franchises and Networks: Terrorism and related activities continue to pose a serious threat and causing delays in the sustainable development of several ECOWAS and ECCAS member states. The economic cost to fight against terrorism is drowning regional economies and frustrating economic growth in the subregions.

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[220] Catholic Relief Services Report, "Social Cohesion Analysis: Cameroon.October 2016, Available at https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/social-cohesion-analysis-cameroon.pdf, accessed 23/10/2020.

[221] Ibid.

The effect of the activities of terrorism in Africa, has been multi-dimensional. From loss of lives, economic cost, security threats, human insecurity and fragility. The economic cost continues to slim down prospects for development. For example, in 2016, the economic cost of terrorism in Africa was US$15.5 billion[222]. This represents an increase of more than ten- fold since 2007, when the economic cost was estimated at US$1.54 billion. In relative terms, Africa's share of the global economic cost of terrorism increased from 4.2 per cent in 2007, to 20.3 per cent in 2016.[223] Between 2007 and 2016 terrorism cost the African continent at a minimum US$119 billion. In reality, this figure is much higher once estimates for GDP losses, lost informal economic activity, extra security spending, and refugee/IDP costs are accounted for.[224]

Persistent insecurity, accompanied by and linked to delayed economic and political reform and integration, as well as other factors, has had profound effects on development trajectories in Central Africa for decades[225]. The situation is not different in Western Africa. It is easy to envisage how a steadily growing population of young people lacking rights and opportunities in Western and Central Africa may be more affected by migration push or pull factors, including displacements that force them to flee further afield[226].

The continuing violence and conflict in the subregions have sparked concerns that the threats from terrorism could derail hard-won economic gains, contribute to political instability and undermine future development. Communities in these areas have experienced the devastating impact of extremist violence from a multiplicity of terrorist groups. However, as we have experienced with ISIL, in a more globalized world, the threats from a regional conflict can spread to impact the global community. The regional and potentially global impacts of terrorism, highlights the importance of the international community taking all necessary steps to find ways to deprive terrorist organizations of their funding[227].

Decimating the terrorist group, would require cutting off their sustained access to funding. Such sources as extortion, robberies, looting, cattle rustling, freewill donations, illicit trades and other forms of profiting from crimes need to be checked.

From the forgoing analysis of the activities of BH sect, it is hypothesized that the conflict created by these terrorists and the associated impact do not only have negative impact on short- or medium-term development but equally hampers sustainable development in conflict areas. Directly and indirectly, other pillars are affected by corruption. In effect, optimal synergistically arrived at plans cannot go far if corruption is not tackled at the same time.

Colonial Vestiges/External Influence and Interests:

We cannot reflect on external dynamics on the critical four pillars, without making references to European powers who had colonized the countries in West and Central Africa. Since independence, the European countries have facilitated trade and diplomatic relations as well as commitment for goodwill socio-economic development. They have maintained closer ties with,

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[222] UNDP 2019 Report, Measuring the Economic Impact of Violent Extremism leading to Terrorism in Africa. P.1

[223] Ibid.

[224] Ibid.

[225] CENTRAL AFRICA - UNDP SUB-REGIONAL STRATEGIC ASSESSMENT REPORT NO. 1

[226] UNDP Sub-Regional Strategic Assessment Report No. 1, March 2017.

[227] TERRORIST FINANCING IN WEST AND CENTRAL AFRICA, October 2016. FATF. Available at https://www.fatf-gafi.org/media/fatf/documents/reports/Terrorist-Financing-West-Central-Africa.pdf. Accessed 23/10/2020.

and control the security environment in the majority of the countries they once had colonial powers over. Different levels of military relationships ranging from defence pacts, the presence of bases through to training have been normal relationships. A human security posture is maintained through civil society organizations from the metropole. Some humanitarian agencies continue to allow the metropole powers to hang on with respect to their erstwhile colonies.[228]

Other international influence comes from the European Union, The United States and China. The powers seek positions of advantages, in their respective interests in Africa. These relationships must be factored into calculations with respect to strategic and operational plans that seek to make the best out of a synergistic approach to support delivery.

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[228] Abdel-Fatau Musah, West Africa: Governance and Security in a Changing Region Africa Program Working Paper Series. International Peace Institute. February, 2009. P.14. See also, Giorgio Spagnol, "Is France Still Exploiting Africa" Institut Européen Des Relations Internationales
Academia Diplomatica Europaea, Available at https://www.ieri.be/en/publications/wp/2019/f-vrier/france-still-exploiting-africa. Accessed 23/10/2020.

7 Impact of Covid-19 on specific issues

7.1 Women

The Covid-19 pandemic has greatly impacted gender issues notably in households across the world and precisely within the African region.Women met with issues of social and economic inequalities and grave human rights abuses. These inequalities have greatly affected the progress made over the years in curbing gender inequalities in most states in the west and central African subregions.

According to UN Women, economic and social tensions, combined with restrictions on movement and cramped living conditions, have led to an increase in cases of gender-based violence.[229] Prior to the pandemic an estimated one in three women experienced violence in their lifetime and with restrictions on movement in place, more people are spending more time online so forms of online violence against women and girls, gaming and other platforms are likely to increase. It is equally likely that the economic impact of the pandemic will lead to increased sexual exploitation and child marriage, particularly exacerbating the vulnerability of women and girls living in fragile economies and refugee camps. This is reflective of the current situation prevailing within countries examined in the case studies within the ECCAS region[230]. Many of those impacted by the numerous conflicts within the subregions are predominantly women and young girls, as their rights have been neglected in a predominantly patriarchal society. The Covid-19 pandemic has greatly contributed adversely in setting back a lot of the advancement that had been realized notably through the various conventions[231] and treaties that have been ratified by states especially those within the west and central subregions

In April, UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres called for an end to all forms of violence everywhere, in war zones and in homes, and for a focus on fighting the pandemic[232]. This call for action by the Secretary General shows the need for a collaborative approach by stakeholders particularly within the two subregions to tackle the inequalities that the crisis have created within states, and create a more equal society where the voices of everyone will be heard especially those considered under the vulnerable group.

7.2 Impact on the Youths

The effects of the Covid-19 pandemic has significantly affected the youth's notably young girls, particularly within sub-Saharan Africa whose population is predominantly made up of youths (60% of the African population). According to statistics from UNESCO at the end of March 2020 more than 89 percent of the world's pupil/student population was no longer in school or university

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[229]Available at https://www.unwomen.org/en/digital-library/publications/2020/04/policy-brief-the-impact-of-covid-19-on-women, https://data.unwomen.org/resources/covid-19-emerging-gender-data-and-why-it-matters

[230] Cameroon, CAR, DRC.

[231] Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women ratified by all member states of the ECCAS sub-region. https://treaties.un.org/Pages/ViewDetails.aspx?src=TREATY&mtdsg_no=IV-8&chapter=4&lang=en (Accessed 3 November 2020)

[232]UNSG address in April 2020 https://www.unwomen.org/fr/news/in-focus/in-focus-gender-equality-in-covid-19-response

due to school closures imposed to curb the spread of the virus[233]. This unprecedented situation forced many students to take courses online, yet a large portion of the population lives in places where technology has not yet penetrated, without the Internet, putting all these young people at a great disadvantage. This situation is reflective of the sub-region whereby a vast majority of students/pupils live in rural communities and don't have access to electricity and internet facilities. The current conflict situation has left many internally displaced and refugees across the sub-region many of whom are young people without access to education partly due to the current security situation and equally due to Covid-19 pandemic. In Cameroon for example in a report published in August 2020, UNICEF revealed that 80 per cent of schools had closed in the North West and South-West regions since the beginning of the crisis, preventing over 3,000 students to attend classes[234].

Young women and girls living in poverty, in remote rural areas, or with disabilities are the most likely to have to withdraw from school to meet the increased need for care and domestic work. They are also more prone to child marriages and other forms of anachronistic cultures as well as violence as families find ways to ease their economic burdens[235]. In subregions that have already been greatly impacted by conflict the likelihood of these forms of violations to occur are much higher particularly amongst the displaced and refugee communities.

Unemployment, too has greatly affected young people. After the economic recession in 2008, youth unemployment rates in many regions were significantly higher than the overall average, and the recent expansion of the gig economy is likely to accentuate this disparity. Even before the pandemic hit, there was already an upward trend in the number of unemployed youths without education and training. Of the approximately 267 million young people in this category worldwide, two-thirds, or 181 million, are young women.[236] Poverty and inequality has rising significantly due to conflicts and socio-political tensions notably in Cameroon, Central African Republic and Democratic Republic of Congo. According to the African Development Bank the Central African subregion remains the least egalitarian regions, with 10 countries among the 19 unequal globally. From 2010 to 2017, agriculture was the largest source of employment in Central Africa, accounting for close to 70 percent of employment compared with 20 percent for services and 11 percent for industry.[237]

The crisis has equally led to the recruitment of many young by terrorist groups such as Boko Haram in northern Cameroon and Chad, and separatist armed factions fighting for secession in

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[233] See https://fr.unesco.org/covid19/educationresponse

[234]OCHA Cameroon emergency covid-19 situation report No.09 of 15 October 2020 https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/covid_19_emergency_situation_report_no._9_final.pdf

[235]UNESCO report on impact of Covid 19 on young girls https://fr.unesco.org/news/filles-seront-plus-durement-touchees-fermetures-decoles-dues-au-covid-19

[236] ILO report of 31 march 2020 https://www.ilo.org/global/about-the-ilo/newsroom/news/WCMS_737060/lang--fr/index.htm, Global Employment Trends for Youth 2020: Technology and the future of jobs https://www.ilo.org/global/publications/books/WCMS_737648/lang--en/index.htm

[237]ADB Central Africa Economic Outlook P15 https://www.afdb.org/fileadmin/uploads/afdb/Documents/Publications/2019AEO/REO_2019-Central_Africa.pdf

the English-speaking regions of Cameroon. Many youths have been prey to some of these armed groups who took advantage of their vulnerability to radicalize them into joining their cause. With Covid-19 worsening and even troubling situation, youths who have been left for long periods without access to education, lack of employment due to hardships as a results of lockdowns and restrictions are primary targets of these groups who lure them by promising better living conditions and wages if they join them.

7.3 Impact on Migration

Prior to the Covid-19 outbreak migration has been a major issue within the two subregions, notably as a result of the numerous conflicts within the subregion, socio-economic crisis, environmental conditions and natural disasters, terrorism and transborder crime. Statistics from International Organization for Migration (IOM) indicates that since 2017, over 75,000 migrants who were stranded along the Central Mediterranean Routes were assisted to return to their countries of origin in West and Central Africa, among which 45,000 returned to the Sahel and Lake Chad Basin.

The current health pandemic has significantly affected migrants across the region due to closure of borders, curfews and restriction of movements leaving many stranded with no means of returning. Many migrants have been confined to camps and settlements, or living in urban areas with overcrowding, poor sanitation, and overstretched or inaccessible health services. Those confined in immigration detention centres and other places where migrants and refugees are deprived of their liberty are particularly at risk. According to IOM about 1,100 Chadian students in Cameroon were stranded while over 2,500 are waiting in IOM's transit centres across the region.[238]

Migrants often face obstacles in accessing health care, including language and cultural barriers, costs, lack of access to information, discrimination and xenophobia. Migrants in an irregular situation can be unable or unwilling to access health care or provide information on their health status because they fear or risk detention, deportation or penalties as a result of their immigration status. The major obstacle, however, remains that in IDP sites, camp-like settings or transit centers, the recommended preventive measures such as social distancing and hygiene measures e.g. hand washing with soap are challenging in overpopulated areas with limited access to water, that's the case mostly across the lake chad basin due to climatic conditions. It is essential that governments take the appropriate measures to ensure prevention and protection amongst the displaced communities in bid to avoid the spread of the virus.

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[238] IOM brief of the Sahel and the Lake Chad Basin amid Covid 19 crisis https://rodakar.iom.int/sites/default/files/document/publications/Sahel%20and%20Lake%20Chad%20Background%20Brief%20-%20COVID-19.pdf

8. CONCLUSION, KEY MESSAGES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Conclusion and Key Messages

The multiplicity and growing complexity of the challenges of human security in the west and central Africa, with preponderance of conflicts as threats to peace and security, development, human rights and humanitarianism, lies the need to explore the interlinked, complementary or joint approach in finding lasting solutions to conflicts

As described in this study, the need for peace and security, development, human rights and humanitarian support, are not differentiated or cast in silos. Conflicts, violence and other threats to human freedoms are hardly linear and predictable. In the same vein, in seeking for viable solutions or responses, the process should not be done in linear terms. The interlinkages approach that allows for complementary synergistic actions, proves a more sustainable way to address conflicts in the west and central African subregions.

In line with specific national and subregional realities in relation to the four pillars, this study provides not only a justification or imperative, but also a road map towards the interlinkages of the four pillars of peace and security, development, human rights and humanitarianism for the west and central African subregions.

Findings and recommendations in the study came from eclectic sources. An extensive study of relevant literature, first to understand the state of the operation of the four pillar issues in the west and central African subregions, and existing innovations or structures for interlinkages, then the situational foundation issues in the interlinkages as well as opportunities and challenges, especially in the light of prevalent issues in transboundary dynamics, youth and gender and the Covid-19 pandemic. There were also various consultations, meetings, interviews and administration of surveys to sample the views of relevant stakeholders.

As seen in the study, aside from national peculiarities, most states in the region are facing very similar or even same challenges and threats in the four pillar issues. Threats to peace and security such as cross-border issues, activities of non-state actors are equally multiplying and taking advantage of the growing fragility of border management. A number of states in the subregions under study, are fast becoming a transit point for hybrid threats to peace and security. In this regards, local/national actors, subregional, regional and international actors should adopt innovative strategies that recognizes that threats to human security are largely interdependent hence the need to be addressed using a common approach of national, regional and international mechanisms, of which the interlinkages of peace and security, development, human rights and humanitarianism is key[239]

The situational analysis has revealed the extent of challenges of the four pillars, and the fact that the drivers of the challenges in the pillars are linked together. In the same vein, solutions and ideas for mitigating the challenges posed by the pillar issues, should not be treated as stand alone.

Engagements with literatures and stakeholders shows that here has been expressed support for joint and complementary approaches in seeking for ideas and lasting solutions to conflicts and

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[239] Friedrich Ebert Stuftung, Dialogues about Challenges in the sahelo-saharan Region,

threats to peace and security in our areas of study. However, this awareness is yet to transcend to real solutions, which would be clearly measured by declining levels of threats to human security and threats to life and safety.

The four pillars interlinkages functions within the situational foundation such as governance/leadership/corruption, institutions, resources, external dynamics and their inherent lapses and strengths.

Providing supports for strengthening institutions at the level of member states, by the ECOWAS, ECCAS, AU and other international organizations is very important. Institutions for human rights, humanitarianism, peace and security, governance, anti-corruption etc, would go a very long way in promoting progress in the usage of the interlinkages.

Recommendations

It is clear that a synergistic approach towards strategic and operational delivery as opposed to a silos orientation is superior with respect to support for assistance in west and central Africa. However, this position has been all along clear as pointed out from foundational and current documents of the UN, African Union and RECs. That this point is being emphasized over and over shows inadequacies with respect to implementation. A comprehensive manual on practical steps towards synergistic policies and operational efforts on operating under the four-pillar interlinkages is necessary.

It is also very important that the implementation of the interlinkages at various levels, (national, subregional, regional, REC and international) be broken down to time and goal based, pragmatic and policy activity levels as much as possible. This would be the most effective way to push for progress and actions that are binding and measurable in terms of outcome.

Peace and Security

Improving the operational efficiency of the Defense and Security Forces: The study has demonstrated the nature of threats and security challenges based on the strategic and conflict environment unique to the west and central African subregions. It is thus imperative to restructure the security and defense forces of the states in the subregions to boost their capacities to cope with the irregular and multifaceted security threats facing them. The outcome of such restructuring processes of the defense and security forces can be measured by the degree to which it has improved their field performance, technical capacities, degree of professionalism, responsiveness or readiness to promptly respond to imminent threats. This of course is necessitated from our description of the nature of limitations (poor motivation and empowerment, under-staffing, poor welfare, opportunities for training and capacity development) available for the security and defense forces in states in our subregions of study. Boosting the capacity for operational efficiency of the defense and security forces, will eventually enhance peace and security, which directly cuts down humanitarian stress, reduce rooms for human right abuses and ultimately lead to sustainable development.

Prioritizing security, even in development and integration visions and program in Central West African region.

Security as broadly described in the study should be a major consideration for any development and or integration agenda or policy. In the pursuit of sub-regional and regional development and or integration, it is very important to contextualize the critical role of security as well as the potential exposure or threats to security, such development and integration plans may hold. A critical example, is in the case of the design and implementation of the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA). As beautiful and very ambitious as the AfCFTA looks, with potential for expanding the export base of African economies, we also see the threatening potential security red flags that needs to be carefully responded to.

Peace and Security in Borders and Boundary Specificities

Governments, Sub-regional and regional associations like ECOWAS and ECCAS should be guided to develop strategic and goal-oriented approaches to peacebuilding and development specifically around border areas. This would be very helpful in addressing the varying dimensions of insecurity and threats across borders as highlighted in this study.

Some initiatives on achieving this include some very strategic investment in the following:

- Enhance local peace infrastructures in border areas
- With the interlinkages philosophy in mind, there should be closer collaborations with governments to lead development interventions of border areas, establishment of state authority, improved security and monitoring of borders, integrated peacebuilding and mediation activities as well as support to local livelihoods within and around the border region, recognizing that there are known legitimate human activities there.

- Support establishment of border surveillance technologies designed to curtail smuggling and conflict-aggravating trade.

Development

The UN SDGs 2030 and the AU Agenda 2063, should be simplified and made very adaptable and in tone with individual state responsibilities to further enjoy understanding of the agendas for her people and institutions. The documents should serve as reference points.

Human Rights

Promotion and respect for Human Rights by the Defense and Security Forces:

The study, especially from the case studies, abundantly demonstrated reports of atrocities, abuses and gross human rights violations frequently amongst members of the defence and security forces of countries in the two subregions. We have also seen the numerous interlinked consequences of

this development. The defense and security forces have failed a lot in defending the human rights of the people.

There is a security attitudinal inclination tilted towards brutality and abuse of human rights. There have been varying cases of abuses of human rights. In the fight against Boko Haram, violent crackdown on political opponents, protests and mass actions, brutality and over militarization of elections. Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) have continued to call attention to these realities. Exploring this, could lead to a human rights-based approach to achieving the interlinkages.

Humanitarianism

The growing humanitarian crisis, disasters resulting from man-made and natural factors, are the outcome or effects of the gaps in governance, peace and security and human rights. Development, resilience, early warnings, social support and responsiveness are some strategies in minimizing the impact of humanitarian crisis as causes as well as consequences of conflicts.

Sector recommendation

Government level: From the foregoing studies, it is clear that despite the varying scenarios, conflicts, threats to peace and security, human rights, development and feeders of humanitarian crisis, all have something in common. Which revolves around poor governance and its surrounding effects, touching on corruption, oppression and suppression, poor socio-economic participation and inclusion, and general lack of hope. Poor governance favours the effects of the changing nature of conflict. Ethno-political, disputes over resources, threats from the transnational terror violence, organized crime, effect of declining resources and climate change, all contribute to the weakening of governmental structures.

The need to ensure that present day practice of democracy translates into improvement of the quality of lives of the common people, through integrity and responsibility cannot be over emphasized. This is critical in driving and sustaining development policies.

The poor handling of the ripple effects or aftermath of the Covid-19 pandemic in a number of African states, resulting to socio-political crisis and economic recessions, does not only show how critical the role of government is, but further demonstrate the interlinkages.

Accountable, responsible and transparent, visionary, transformative leadership that is youth inclusive is in high deficit.

Political parties as a force in governance

Most states in the west and central Africa subregion have subscribed to the democratic system of government. This makes political parties a very critical institution in their governance architecture. As such, beyond producing candidates to capture political offices, political parties in states in west and central Africa, must become responsible institutions of government.

Encouraging citizens' ownership and participation for inclusive and peaceful societies.

Deliberate interventions to monitor and promote free, fair and credible elections across the sub-region

Consolidating on the AU Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance, the African Charter on Human and People's Rights, and Protocol on Rights of Women, the African Youth Charter as well as the AUC Decade of Youth and the recently launched UN Security Council Resolution 2250 (2015) on Youth, Peace and Security, the following could be pursued:

Support initiatives that enhance women's voice in the sub-region advocating for gender equality, as well as peace and development

Support dialogue on youth development, ensuring mobilisation of youth empowerment networks at various levels

The emerging realities from the digital space, calls for the need for digital governance.

The expansion of the internet space, social media and the role they play in the society, especially as instrument of media and information dissemination cannot be overlooked. Recent socio-political developments in African states have showed the opportunities/strength this brings for progressive governance, and how it could become a tool against the state. This reality has also revealed the potential for state or institutionalized suppression of human rights expressed as suppression of the social media, clamping down on strong opposition voices and other dictatorial tendencies.

Institutions/Civil Society Organizations

From our studies of the situational foundations of the four pillar interlinkages, we have seen the critical role of civil society organizations (CSOs). The AU recognizes the role of civil society in the activities of the Union as enshrined in Article 4 (c) of the Constitutive Act of the African Union and in the relevant sections of the Protocol Relating to the Establishment of the Peace and Security Council of the African Union and the Post Conflict Reconstruction and Development Policy (PCRDP). However, a number of issues influence the role and impact of civil society organizations in their ecosystem role in the areas of peace and security and the other pillars. Factors like political influence and commitment, legal framework and other organizational and resources issues affecting CSOs requires attention.

Greater coordination of networks or groups of NGOs to ensure adoption of interlinkages philosophy into their programs and interventions. Greater collaboration between the state and the NGOs, CSOs, could help achieve some quick and steady progress on the four pillars. Interventions should be done with the ultimate picture of addressing conflicts. All indicating points and red lights capable of fueling conflicts, should be factored in the deign phase.

Enhancement of sub-regional cooperation on environmental management, conservation and climate change response initiatives:

Sustained collaboration on subregional environmental conservation interventions, for imp-roving environmental management, climate change and conservation of the environment, especially collaborating with civil society networks.

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Annex on Case Studies

Nigeria

Nigeria, a former colony of British West Africa, is one of the power houses of the Africa. Neighbored by Chad, Niger and Cameroon. As at 2020 population, her population is well over 200 million people cutting across diverse cultures and traditional orientations, spread in 36 states and the capital. There are over over 250 different ethno-linguistic groups in Nigeria. This multiplicity is not entirely unconnected to the Inter-ethnic and religious crisis has characterized the nature of relations amongst groups of people of Nigeria.

The economy of the country has been based on the exploration of crude oil, since its discovery, that occasioned the abandonment of other critical sectors like Agriculture and solid mining. The exploration of crude oil has presented a thread in the challenges facing the country. From providing a cesspool for corruption to posing environmental crisis as well as fueling feeling of marginalization.

Since 1999, the country has witnessed a number of democratic governances, however, characterized by poor regression in government, policies and disregard for the much-respected principles of democracy. Nigeria like a number of other countries, unfortunately has represented democracy in the wrong light, with cases of corruption, mismanagement of resources, very poor and retarded performance in key development and progress indices that shows progress in the four pillar issues of peace and security, development, human rights and humanitarianism. The country's past glories and legacies is fast getting smeared and outshined by the increasing cases of corruption, human rights abuses by even state actors, denial of press freedom, several threats to insecurity, like terrorism, kidnapping, robbery, illicit trade deals and others.

Nigeria has continued to add to the global pool of IDPs, the country is also prone to periodic cases of flooding and droughts. A number of terrorists' groups with various style of leaderships, tactics and base for operation such as Boko Haram, ISWA, etc continue to threaten peace and security, development, human rights, whilst expanding the burden of humanitarian crisis. Nigeria is also involved in a number of transboundary or transnational issues in the lake chad to the larger west and entire African region.

The realities of climate change/environmental changes has been seen clearly from the increasing concern on national security. There has been increased competition over resources such as land

for grazing and land farming, resulting majorly to the farmer-herders conflicts, claiming lives in thousands. The Nigerian state has a number of frameworks and policies on addressing issues around the four pillars.

MALI

Estimated in 2019 to be 28,020,000, covering an area of 1,241, 238 Sq KM. Bounded on the north by Algeria, east by Niger and Burkina Faso, south by Cote d'Ivoire and Guinea and the west by Senegal and Mauritania[240].

The geographical and cultural realities of Mali, is casted in the North and South explanation. The north, large expanse of arid and desert land, with clustered urban cities and semi-nomadic communities. The south, with a sub-tropical climatic reality is densely populated by people of Bamako, Mali's capital. By cultural placing, the north is more ethnically diverse, with the Songhauis, Moors, and Fula communities located around the Niger River regions, and Tuaregs – a cluster of semi-nomadic communities. While the south is mostly composed of the Bambara ethnic group. Despite being composed of various ethnic groups, over 90% of Mali's population is Muslim. Islam is deeply rooted in the history of Mali[241]. On the background of this ordering, Mali has witnessed series of northern insurgencies against the southern Malian government.

The economy of Mali has been generally considered as performing well by some regional and international organizations. Agricultural activities around food crops and tertiary sector. Like Nigeria, about 80 percent of her population have their livelihood connected to Agriculture. Mining activities especially gold, has increased foreign investment and also contributed to the revenue base.

Despite this positive economic outlook, Mali remains one of the poorest countries in the world, going by considerations of data from the UN HDP. Mali faces profound challenges including vulnerabilities to the effect of climate change, very weak governance, lack of accountability and transparency, corruption and a highly criminalized economy

Since the 2012 crisis, Mali has continued to remain highly aide dependent calling for the need for more humanitarian interventions.

DRC

DRC is the largest country in the subregion of central Africa, bordered in the northwest by the Republic of Congo, north by central Africa Republic, north east by South Sudan, to the east of Uganda, Rwanda and Burundi and Tanzania.

DRC remains one of the poorest countries in the world. For example, in 2018, not less than 72 percent, mostly in the north west and Kaai region were living below $1.90 per day.

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[240] Mali, Britannica.
[241] Mali SSR Background Note

DRC has had a path roughened with so many conflicts since 1990s, some related to politics and elections. DRC was amongst the worst hit by the Ebola epidemic, with over 2, 200 deaths

The security situation in some areas of the DRC has deteriorated with continuing inter-ethnic and political violence in places like North Kivu, South Kivu, and Ituri. According to the UNHCR, the UN Refugee Agency, numerous armed actors continue to fight against the Congolese armed forces (FARDC) and the UN Stabilization Mission (MONUSCO), with several attacks on civilians and deaths as a result of cross-fire.in North Kivu, intense fighting in the Beni, Masisi, Rutshuru and Lubero territories has led to large scale displacements and serious human rights violations in South Kivu, despite some improvements in the security situation in 2018, fighting in the Fizi and Uvira territories displaced about 50,000 persons between January and April 2019[242].

In October 2006, the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), experienced possibly the world's deadliest humanitarian catastrophe, held the second of two rounds of the first free presidential elections in 46 years. The culmination of a transitional process funded, designed and overseen by the West, the elections were supposed to bring stability, accountability and democracy to a land long devastated by war, poor administration and authoritarianism. Sadly, this brighter future is unlikely to be reached any time soon, for the transitional process is fatally flawed. A bold approach is needed to reform the DRC's governmental apparatus, the collapse of which not only affects its citizens, but also destabilizes states throughout the continent and provides a haven for terrorists, arms traffickers, and criminal networks. The country is roughly the same size as Western Europe, but its state has almost entirely withered away, leaving an increasingly despairing population to fend for themselves within a Hobbesian nightmare of chaos and violence. In the last decade alone, violence, disease and malnutrition have killed nearly four million, while armies, warlords and assorted gangs have pilfered hundreds of millions of dollars in gold, diamonds and coltan. The scale of these problems has been magnified by DRC's tempting natural resources, vast size, disadvantageous political geography and meager infrastructure. There is a wealth of mineral deposits, including uranium, diamonds, copper, cobalt and coltan. But instead of acting as the country's economic engine, this natural resource base is fueling today's conflict. Another factor contributing to conflict is the deep geographical and political divisions that have led to outbreaks of violence between competing factions. The DRC's collapse not only affects its citizens; it also destabilizes states throughout the continent, at least half a dozen of which have been drawn into its civil war in recent years, spawning Africa's first 'world war.' The West has pumped billions of dollars into humanitarian programs and a large UN peacekeeping deployment, but it has not fully examined whether its strategy for the country will deal with the root causes of its dysfunction. The current international effort to fix the DRC prescribes conventional remedies for failed states – elections, economic liberalization and security reforms – that are desirable, but none of which will make a significant difference unless coupled with an ambitious plan to counteract the systemic roots of the country's profound dysfunctionalities. If the DRC is to develop homegrown capacities that can eventually overcome the state's problems, the country's institutions must be redesigned so that they better reflect its political geography, limited governance capacities, dearth of infrastructure and abundant mineral wealth. Above all, this means giving local leaders a genuine chance to effectively serve the population.

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[242] "UNHCR Position on Returns to North Kivu, South Kivu, Ituri and Adjacent Areas in the Democratic Republic of Congo Affected by Ongoing Conflict and Violence" September 2019. Available at http//www.refworl.org. Accessed 21/10/2020.

Cameroon

Cameroon, is a Central African Republic country with over 26 million people as at 2020, occupying an area of 475,000 square kilometers, in the Gulf of Guinea.

Cameroon's geography provides a natural geo-strategic advantage, serving as a transit point of exchange in the sub-region. Sharing borders with six countries, especially Chad and CAR. This lies central in the economic and socio-political motivations that made Cameroon a hot target of the colonial interest of three major European powers, Britain, France and Germany.

Cameroon is also one of the most diverse countries in Africa, stretching from the Sudano-Sahelian region in North Cameroon through to the High Guinea savannah and Western Highlands in the centre and west, to the dense humid tropical rain forest of the south. Cameroon had largely managed to stay out of instabilities and violence characteristics of some African countries.

The security situation of Cameroon is marked by the conflicts plaguing the country; the fight against the Islamic extremists Boko Haram terrorist group in the north of the country, the fight against SELEKA rebels from the CAR in the east and the fight against separatists' fighters in the two English-speaking regions of the country (the northwest and southwest regions)[243].The north of Cameroon still continues to face attacks from the Boko Haram terror in the sub-region

Sustained ethnic and regional tensions have been a major challenge and opportunity cost for most development and progressive drives in Cameroon. Peace and security have largely informed policymaking concerns and interests of successive administrations. Even though the country has not experienced much of very open conflicts, peace building has been a major preoccupation of the government leading to some policies that in the long run, were not best for the economy.
The political landscape can be said to have been relatively stable. Cameroon successfully obtained the resourceful Bakassi Peninsula from Nigeria in 2008, same year she pushed for some constitutional review process on presidential terms.

The agenda of the Government, revolving round poverty reduction, is the pursuit of long-term development Vision for Cameroon. The Vision with plans up to 2035, seeks to make Cameroon more democratically fitted, united, reducing poverty, reaching the middle income country status and progress on industrialization.

Inadequate infrastructures, weak governance, and institutional capacities, chronic state fragility, poverty, non-effectively participatory private sector. Poverty like the other case study countries, has remained a major recurring challenge, with poverty corelating with agro-ecological zones and following climate changes. Poverty is highly concentrated in the north. Intra-regional, gender inequality remains highly visible.

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[243]   Cameroon   2020   Crime   and   Safety   Report.   Available   at http//www.osac.gov/country/Cameroon/content/detail/regort. Accessed 21/10/2020.

Central African Republic

A country in the Central African sub-region with a population of 4,826,000 occupying a land area of 622, 436 kms. Bordered by Chad, Sudan, south Sudan, DRC and Congo Brazzavile and Cameroon.

Since gaining independence in 1960, CAR has had an unstable economy, largely due to poor management, corruption and government deficiency. The major life-wire of the economy being Agriculture at the subsistence level, with mining and timber activities as base for import trade. The geography positioning provided some forms of landlocking limitation. There is also the challenge of infrastructural limitation, poor level of human resource or capital development, ineffective governance coupled with political instability, further weakens CAR.

Since independence in 1960, the country has experienced four successive coups and numerous attempted coups, which has created a political culture and vicious circle characterized by violence and economic predation, which continues to weaken the economy, with lot of unused resources and treasures amidst so much poverty and lack.

The conflict that broke out in 2012 in the Central African Republic and culminated on 24 March 2013 in the overthrow of President François Bozizé by an opportunistic alliance of rebel groups called "Séléka" is the most recent escalation in a series of crises that the country has experienced during almost 40 years. For several decades, successive Governments have concentrated weak power in the capital while armed groups (rebels and bandits) have controlled vast parts of the country's territory.

Conflict in the Central African Republic has been both a result and a driver of instability in neighbouring States.

According to the Final Report of the Panel of Experts on the Central African Republic drafted pursuant to UN Security Council Resolution 2507 (2020)[244], the peace and security situation in CAR today is strongly affected by the prospect of presidential and legislative elections scheduled for December 202 and March 2021.

Since December 2013 until today the number of humanitarian organisations present in the CAR has almost doubled. In December 2013, there were 47 humanitarian organisations operating in the CAR, by May 2014, 95 humanitarian organizations were undertaking operations or were in process of establishing themselves in the country. Most humanitarian operations are in Bangui, Ombella - Mpoko and Ouham provinces.[245]

Major challenges and areas of urgent concern in CAR includes: Restoration of security nationwide, peace-building and national cohesion, The fight against food insecurity and basic social services delivery to the populace both in Bangui and in the hinterland:, Limited productive capacity of enterprises and their weak financial situation due to looting and destruction of their

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[244] Available at http//www.reliefweb.int/report/central-african-republic/final-report-panel-experts-central-african-republic-extended. Accesed 21/10/2020.

[245] Reliefweb, ECHO Factsheet-Central African Republic-23 December, 2019.

production equipment, The underdeveloped economic infrastructure (transport, energy, ICT, water and sanitation), Enhancement of national capabilities and good governance promotion[246]

Annex 2. Survey Questions

Questionnaire on Peace and Security, Human Rights, Humanitarian and Development.
Survey Questionnaire

Dear participant,

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this study. ECA through its Regional Integration and Trade Division (RITD) and five Subregional Offices (SROs) for Eastern, Southern, North, West and Central Africa has commissioned subregional studies on the interlinkages between the development, peace and security, human rights and humanitarian pillars covering the five subregions of Africa. The studies seek to interrogate and analyse the interlinkages between the pillars in the various subregions with the aim of promoting synergistic, complementary and joined-up implementation of interventions addressing peace and security, human rights, humanitarian and development situations. The intent is to contribute to effective and lasting solutions to conflicts in the subregions. Crosscutting issues to be factored in the studies include gender and youth, and COVID-19. They will also address transboundary issues to help promote intra-regional cooperation in tackling conflict situations by harnessing the interlinkages.

The studies are being conducted in partnership with the Office of the Special Adviser on Africa (OSAA), with the Department of Global Communications (DGC), the United Nations Office to the African Union (UNOAU), the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) and the United Nations Office on the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UNOCHA) being important collaborators in the process. They are designed to lead to the production of robust study reports on harnessing the interlinkages to inform policy and practice in conflict prevention and resolution situations. They will be published as standalone reports, and at the same time feed into the regional study being conducted under the leadership of OSAA. The primary beneficiaries are the eight African Union recognized Regional Economic Communities (RECs) across the five subregions of Africa. Member States of the RECs, the African Union Commission (AUC), the African Union Development Agency (AUDA-NEPAD) and the Secretariat of the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM) will also benefit from the study findings.

Please provide your opinion about the issues raised in the questionnaire, which would take about 10 to 15 minutes.

The questionnaire is designed to be anonymous. Your response will be confidential. You have the right to refuse to answer any question – it is totally voluntary. Completion and return of this questionnaire imply consent.

INSTRUCTIONS ON HOW TO COMPLETE THE SURVEY
1. Read each question carefully.
2. Answer each question by filling in the required space, and putting and **x** or a √ in the box of your choice, unless asked otherwise.

SECTION A: Socio-demographic and general profile of respondents
This set of questions is about you

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[246] African Development Bank Group Central African Republic Country Strategy Paper (Csp 2017-2021) Regional Directorate General – Central Africa Rdgc/Cocf November 2017

S/N	QUESTIONS	RESPONSES	CODE
A1	Sex	Male	1
		Female	2
		Others	3
A2	Age		
A4	Marital status	Married	1
		Single	2
		Divorced	3
		Separated	4
		Widowed	5
A4	Highest education complemented	No formal education	1
		Primary school	2
		Secondary school	3
		Tertiary education	4
		Post tertiary	5
A5a	Sector	Public (Government) Sector	1
		Non State	2
		Regional/International Institutions	3
A5b	Specific sector	Development	1
		Regional and International work	2
		NGO/Humanitarian work	3
		Private work	4
		Legal/Human rights	5
		Academic and Media	6
A6	Country		
A7	Region	Central Africa	1
		West Africa	2
A8	How prevalent are conflicts (simmering tensions, violent conflicts and protracted conflicts) in your country?	Highly prevalent	1
		Prevalent	2
		Not prevalent	3
A9	Can you mention the prevention and resolution approaches employed in your country to tackle these conflicts?		

Section B: Peace and Security

Please tick [√] the correct answer and also fill in the appropriate response by giving the necessary details in the spaces provided below.

S/N	QUESTIONS	RESPONSES	CODE
B1a	How do you rate the peace and security situation in your country?	Low Peace and security	1
		Medium Peace and security	2
		High Peace and security	3
		Very High Peace and security	4

B1b	How do you rate the peace and security situation in your subregion?	Low Peace and security Medium Peace and security High Peace and security Very High Peace and security	1 2 3 4
B2	What are the threats to peace and security in your country and subregion?	**Tick as many that apply** Violent crimes Terrorism Electoral violence Herders-farmers conflict Religious extremism Maritime piracy Inequality/Injustice Greed/Corruption/Mismanagement Grievance Inter/intracommunity conflict Youth delinquency/violence Climate change risks Drug trafficking Human trafficking Separatism/Rebellion Unemployment Others specify-------------------------------- -------	 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16
B3	Which peace and security threat is/are most prevalent in your community or country?		
B4	What factors would you say promotes/encourages the threats to peace and security in your country?		
B5a	Has the Covid-19 pandemic affected your safety and security?	Yes No Indifference	1 2 3
B5b	If yes in B5a above, please specify in what way(s) the pandemic have affected your safety and security?		
B6a	Is the fear of the police force and other security agents a major concern in your community or country?	Yes No Indifference	1 2 3
B6b	If yes in B6a above, please state why you are afraid of police and other security agents in your community or country?		

B7	Does terrorism pose an immediate challenge to you and your household in your country?	Yes No Indifference	1 2 3
B8	Are corruption and lack of transparency the greatest threat to achieving peace and security?	Strongly agree Agree Neither agree nor disagree Disagree Strongly disagree	1 2 3 4 5
B9	In the past 12 months preceding this study, how many times have you or your household been a victim of insecurity? For example, robbed, attacked?		
B10	How often do people suffer loss of properties, assets or investment as a result of insecurity issues in your community/country?	Very often Often Not very often Rarely	1 2 3 4
B11	Does fear of crime and insecurity affect business activities in your community or country?	Yes No Indifference	1 2 3
B12	How much do you trust the state security system?	High trust Low trust Don't trust them at all	1 2 3
B13	A society where conflicts are resolved peacefully through dialogue would experience sustainable development faster?	Strongly agree Agree Neither agree nor disagree Disagree Strongly disagree	1 2 3 4 5
B14	Does lack of good governance in your country hinder the existence of peace and security?	Strongly agree Agree Neither agree nor disagree Disagree Strongly disagree	1 2 3 4 5

Section C: Development

Please tick [√] the correct answer and also fill in the appropriate response by giving the necessary details in the spaces provided.

S/N	QUESTIONS	RESPONSES	CODE
C1	How do you rate the level of development in your state and country?	Highly developed Adequately Developed Underdeveloped	1 2 3

C2	Which of the following do you think hinders development in your state and country?	**Tick as many that apply**	
		Bribery/corruption	1
		Bad/greedy leaders	2
		Violent crimes	3
		Lack of education	4
		Capital Flight	5
		Fragility of political institutions	6
		Inequality/Injustice	7
		Lack of social protection	8
		Greed	9
		Grievance	10
		Inter/intracommunity conflict	11
		Youth violence/gang	12
		Climate change risks	13
		Unemployment	14
		Lack of access to health care	15
		Lack of financial resources (SMEs)	16
		Others specify----------------------------	
C3	Are corruption and lack of transparency the greatest issues in development?	Strongly agree	1
		Agree	2
		Neither agree nor disagree	3
		Disagree	4
		Strongly disagree	5
C4	Is freedom of democratic rights critical for sustainable development?	Strongly agree	1
		Agree	2
		Neither agree nor disagree	3
		Disagree	4
		Strongly disagree	5
C5	Is respecting human rights the most critical issue in sustainable development?	Strongly agree	1
		Agree	2
		Neither agree nor disagree	3
		Disagree	4
		Strongly disagree	5
C6	Cultural/religious tolerance is critical for sustainable development?	Strongly agree	1
		Agree	2
		Neither agree nor disagree	3
		Disagree	4
		Strongly disagree	5
C7	Do poor people around you have access to education in your community and country?	Yes	1
		No	2
		Indifference	3
C8	How difficult is it for the poor to secure a modest	Very easy	1
		Easy	2
		Difficult	3

		Very difficult	4
C9	Poor access to low quality infrastructure is a major threat to sustainable development?	Strongly agree Agree Neither agree nor disagree Disagree Strongly disagree	1 2 3 4 5
C10	Providing young people with access to quality education is a prerequisite for development?	Strongly agree Agree Neither agree nor disagree Disagree Strongly disagree	1 2 3 4 5
C11a	Has the Covid-19 pandemic affected your source of livelihood?	Yes No Indifference	1 2 3
C11b	If yes, to question C11a above, please can you state how it affected your source of livelihood?		
C12	Environmental preservation is critical for sustainable development?	Strongly agree Agree Neither agree nor disagree Disagree Strongly disagree	1 2 3 4 5
C13	Empowering youth and women are critical for sustainable development?	Strongly agree Agree Neither agree nor disagree Disagree Strongly disagree	1 2 3 4 5
C14	Improving healthcare is necessary for sustainable development?	Strongly agree Agree Neither agree nor disagree Disagree Strongly disagree	1 2 3 4 5
C15	How can civil society organisations promote sustainable development in your state and country?		

Section D: Human Rights

Please tick [√] the correct answer and also fill in the appropriate response by giving the necessary details in the spaces provided.

S/N	QUESTIONS	RESPONSES	CODE
D1	How do you rate the level of respect for human rights in your country?	Very high High Medium	1 2 3

		Low	4
		Very low	5
D2	What do you consider the greatest threat to human rights in your country?	**Tick all that apply** Police abuse/brutality Terrorism Religious extremism Inequality/Injustice Inter/intracommunity conflict Youth violence/gang Gender based violence Weak laws Non-enforcement of legal framework Others specify---------------------- ----------	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9
D3	Do more developed societies with greater respect for human rights have more effective government?	Strongly agree Agree Neither agree nor disagree Disagree Strongly disagree	1 2 3 4 5
D4	Most people in your country are not aware of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights?	Strongly agree Agree Neither agree nor disagree Disagree Strongly disagree	1 2 3 4 5
D5	How serious is the general human rights challenge in your country?	Very serious Serious Less serious Not serious at all	1 2 3 4
D6	How free are you to practice any religion of your choice in your country?	Very free Free Not free Not free at all	1 2 3 4
D7	Law enforcement agencies in your country do not respect the rights of citizens?	Strongly agree Agree Neither agree nor disagree Disagree Strongly disagree	1 2 3 4 5
D8	Reinforcing the rights of women and girl child is very critical for sustainable development in your community/country?	Strongly agree Agree Neither agree nor disagree Disagree Strongly disagree	1 2 3 4 5
D9	Did the COVID-19 and state measures worsen the abuse	Yes No Indifference	1 2 3

		of human rights in your community/country?		
	D10	If yes to question 9 above, please state ways your rights was abused		

Section E: Humanitarian Pillars

Please tick [√] the correct answer and also fill in the appropriate response by giving the necessary details in the spaces provided.

S/N	QUESTIONS	RESPONSES	CODE
E1	How do you rate the effectiveness of humanitarianism in your country?	Very effective Effective Ineffective	1 2 3
E2	Which risk is more prevalent in your country?	Human made risks Natural risk	
E3	What are the threats to humanitarian pillars in your community/country?	**Tick all that apply** Lack of early warning Lack of assistance to IDPs Natural disasters Manmade disasters Lack of protection for IDPs Food insecurity Ineffective disaster management Lack of preparedness & response Lack of effective rehabilitation Lack of assistance to victims Others specify-----------------------------	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
E4	Do humanitarian organisations in your country have the capacity and flexibility to adjust and adapt and work in synergy with other stakeholders?	Yes No Indifference	1 2 3
E5	What are the most unmet humanitarian needs of your country?	i. ii. iii iv	
E6a	What roles do civil societies organisations play in humanitarian and development works in your country?		
E6b	What roles do private sector play in humanitarian and development works in your country?		

E 7	Humanitarian aids and support do not get to the people who needs it in your country?	Strongly agree	1
		Agree	2
		Neither agree nor disagree	3
		Disagree	4
		Strongly disagree	5
E 8	Rendering aids and help to the most vulnerable is also a humanitarian service?	Strongly agree	1
		Agree	2
		Neither agree nor disagree	3
		Disagree	4
		Strongly disagree	5
E 9	Lack of good governance negatively affect humanitarian services in your country?	Strongly agree	1
		Agree	2
		Neither agree nor disagree	3
		Disagree	4
		Strongly disagree	5
E 1 0	Targeting youth and women are critical in humanitarian services?	Strongly agree	1
		Agree	2
		Neither agree nor disagree	3
		Disagree	4
		Strongly disagree	5
E 1 1	Partiality negatively affects humanitarian services?	Strongly agree	1
		Agree	2
		Neither agree nor disagree	3
		Disagree	4
		Strongly disagree	5
E 1 2	Lack of neutrality negatively affect humanitarian services?	Strongly agree	1
		Agree	2
		Neither agree nor disagree	3
		Disagree	4
		Strongly disagree	5

Section F: Interlink between the four pillars

S/N	QUESTIONS	RESPONSES	CODE
F1	There is an interlink among peace and security, development, human rights and humanitarian?	Strongly agree	1
		Agree	2
		Neither agree nor disagree	3
		Disagree	4
		Strongly disagree	5
F2	Do you think technology affects the humanitarian, human rights, peace, security and development?	Yes	1
		No	2
		Indifference	3
F3	Do humanitarian and development actors work together in your community/country?	Yes	1
		No	2
		Indifference	3

F4	In what ways do human rights compliment peace and security and development?		
F5	Are the effects of the threats to peace and security similar or the same with the effect of underdevelopment?	Yes No Indifference	1 2 3
F6	Lack of peace and security hinders development?	Strongly agree Agree Neither agree nor disagree Disagree Strongly disagree	1 2 3 4 5
F7	Underdevelopment is the cause and effect of human rights abuse in your country	Strongly agree Agree Neither agree nor disagree Disagree Strongly disagree	1 2 3 4 5
F8	Addressing transboundary issues is critical in tackling conflict situations by harnessing the interlinkages?	Strongly agree Agree Neither agree nor disagree Disagree Strongly disagree	1 2 3 4 5
F9a	Has your institution or organisation been utilizing methodologies and tools for integrating the four pillars into their policies and practices.	Yes No Indifference	1 2 3
F9b	If yes, could you name them?		
F10	Have there been opportunities in the application of the interlinkages approach for conflict prevention and resolution?	Yes No Indifference	1 2 3
F10a	If yes, please mention them?		
F11a	Have there been challenges in the application of the interlinkages approach for conflict prevention and resolution?	Yes No Indifference	1 2 3
F11b	If yes, please mention them?		
F12	Please comment on how you think that the four pillars could be harnessed or promote complementary interventions to contribute to effective lasting solutions to conflicts		

ECA Report for West and Central Africa

Section A. Socio-demographic Characteristics of Respondents.

Section A, deals with the socio-demographic characteristics of the respondents, the sex, age, marital status, highest educational qualification obtained, sector, country and region of the respondents were ascertained in this section.

N:B- The survey captured responses from very few respondents from Ethiopia and Kenya. Even though their input had very little or no impact in the outcome of the survey, it would not reflect in the final copy of the report.

Table 1: Socio-demographic characteristics of the respondents

	Sex		
Country	Female	Male	**Total**
Benin	1(20.0%)	4(80.0%)	5(2%)
Burkina	1(12.5%)	3(75.0%)	4(1.6%)
Faso	3(37.5%)	5(62.5%)	8(3.2%)
Burundi	2(8.7%)	21(91.3%)	23(9.1%)
Cameroo	4(26.7%)	11(73.3%)	15(5.9%)
n	0(0.0%)	1(100.0%)	1(0.4%)
Cote	1(25%)	3(75%)	4(1.6%)
d'Ivoire	4(66.7%)	2(33.3%)	6(2.4%)
Ethiopia	1(50.0%)	1(50.0%)	2(0.8%)
Ghana	4(66.7%)	2(33.3%)	6(2.4%)
Guinea B	2(66.7%)	1(33.3%)	3(1.2%)
Kenya	0(0.0%)	2(100.0%)	2(0.8%)
Liberia	56(34.5%)	105(65.5%)	161(63.8%)
Mali	3(60.0%)	2(40.0%)	5(2%)
Niger	0(0.0%)	1(100.0%)	1(0.4%)
Nigeria	0(0.0%)	4(100.0%)	4(1.6%)
Senegal	1(50.0%)	1(50.0%)	2(0.8%)
Sierra	**83(32.9%)**	**169(67.1%)**	**252(100%)**
Leone			
The			
Gambia			
Togo			
Total			
	Age (Mean Age = 38.5)					
	18 – 27	28 – 37	38 – 47	48 – 57	58 and above	**Total**

Benin	0(0.0%)	2(40.0%)	0(0.0%)	1(20.0%)	2(40.0%)	**5(100%)**
Burkina	0(0.0%)	0(0.0%)	2(50.0%)	1(25.0%)	1(25.0%)	**4(100%)**
Faso	0(0.0%)	1(12.5%)	7(87.5%)	0(0.0%)	0(0.0%)	**8(100%)**
Burundi	6(26.1%)	14(60.9%)	0(0.0%)	2(8.7%)	1(4.3%)	**23(100%)**
Cameroo	3(20.0%)	4(26.7%)	6(40.0%)	2(13.3%)	0(0.0%)	**15(100%)**
n	0(0.0%)	1(100%)	0(0.0%)	0(0.0%)	0(0.0%)	**1(100%)**
Cote	0 (0.0%)	1(25%)	1(25%)	2(50%)	0(0.0%)	**4(100%)**
d'Ivoire	0(0.0%)	1(16.7%)	1(16.7%)	2(33.3%)	2(33.3%)	**6(100%)**
Ethiopia	0(0.0%)	1(50.0%)	0(0.0%)	0(0.0%)	1(50.0%)	**2(100%)**
Ghana	0(0.0%)	1(16.7%)	2(33.3%)	1(16.7%)	2(33.3%)	**6(100%)**
Guinea B	0(0.0%)	3(100.0%)	0(0.0%)	(0.0%)	0(0.0%)	**3(100%)**
Kenya	0(0.0%)	0(0.0%)	1(50.0%)	1(50.0%)	0(0.0%)	**2(100%)**
Liberia	34(21.1	71(44.1%)	29(18%)	15(9.3%)	12(7.3%)	**161(100%**
Mali	%)	4(80.0%)	1(20.0%)	0(0.0%)	0(0.0%)	**)**
Niger	0(0.0%)	0(0.0%)	1(100.0	0(0.0%)	0(0.0%)	**5(100%)**
Nigeria	0(0.0%)	0(0.0%)	%)	2(50.0%)	1(25.0%)	**1(100%)**
Senegal	0(0.0%)	0(0.0%)	1(25.0%)	2(100.0%)	0(0.0%)	**4(100%)**
Sierra	0(0.0%)	**104(41.3%)**	0(0.0%)	**31(12.3%**	**22(8.7%)**	**2(100%)**
Leone	**43(17.1**		**52(20.6**	**)**		**252(100%**
The	**%)**		**%)**			**)**
Gambia						
Togo						
Total						

	Marital Status					
	Divorced	Married	Separated	Single	Widowed	**Total**
Benin	0(0.0%)	4(80.0%)	0(0.0%)	0(0.0%)	1(20.0%)	**5(100%)**
Burkina	0(0.0%)	4(100.0%)	0(0.0%)	0(0.0%)	0(0.0%)	**4(100%)**
Faso	0(0.0%)	7(87.5%)	0(0.0%)	1(12.5%)	0(0.0%)	**8(100%)**
Burundi	0(0.0%)	7(30.4%)	0(0.0%)	16(69.6%)	0(0.0%)	**23(100%)**
Cameroo	1(6.7%)	6(40.0%)	1(6.7%)	7(46.7%)	0(0.0%)	**15(100%)**
n	0(0.0%)	1(100.0%)	0(0.0%)	0(0.0%)	0(0.0%)	**1(100%)**
Cote	0(0.0%)	2(50%)	0(0.0%)	2(50%)	0(0.0%)	**4(100%)**
d'Ivoire	0(0.0%)	3(50.0%)	0(0.0%)	1(16.7%)	2(33.3%)	**6(100%)**
Ethiopia	0(0.0%)	1(50.0%)	0(0.0%)	1(50.0%)	0(0.0%)	**2(100%)**
Ghana	1(16.7%)	2(33.3%)	0(0.0%)	3(50.0%)	0(0.0%)	**6(100%)**
Guinea B	0(0.0%)	1(33.3%)	0(0.0%)	2(66.7%)	0(0.0%)	**3(100%)**
Kenya	0(0.0%)	2(100.0%)	0(0.0%)	0(0.0%)	0(0.0%)	**2(100%)**
Liberia	1(0.6%)	84(52.2%)	1(0.6%)	74(45.9%)	1(0.6%)	**161(100%**
Mali	0(0.0%)	3(60.0%)	1(20.0%)	1(20.0%)	0(0.0%)	**)**
Niger	0(0.0%)	1(100.0%)	0(0.0%)	0(0.0%)	0(0.0%)	**5(100%)**
Nigeria	1(12.5%)	2(50.0%)	0(0.0%)	1(12.5%)	0(0.0%)	**1(100%)**
Senegal	1(50.0%)	1(50.0%)	0(0.0%)	0(0.0%)	0(0.0%)	**4(100%)**
Sierra	**5(2.0%)**	**131(52.0**	**3(1.2%)**	**109(43.2**	**4(1.6%)**	**2(100%)**
Leone		**%)**		**%)**		**252(100%**
The						**)**
Gambia						
Togo						
Total						

	Highest Education					
	Post Tertiary	Tertiary education		Secondary education		**Total**
Benin	2(40.0%)	3(60.0%)		0(0.0%)		**5(100%)**
	0(0.0%)	4(100.0%)		0(0.0%)		**4(100%)**

Burkina Faso	4(50.0%)	3(37.5%)	1(12.5%)	**8(100%)**
Burundi	12(52.2%)	10(43.5%)	1(4.3%)	**23(100%)**
Cameroon	5(33.3%)	10(66.7%)	0(0.0%)	**15(100%)**
Cote d'Ivoire	0(0.0%)	1(100.0%)	0(0.0%)	**1(100%)**
Ethiopia	3(75%)	1(25%)	0(0.0%)	**4(100%)**
Ghana	4(66.7%)	2(33.3%)	0(0.0%)	**6(100%)**
Guinea B	1(50.0%)	1(50.0%)	0(0.0%)	**2(100%)**
Kenya	3(50.0%)	3(50.0%)	0(0.0%)	**6(100%)**
Liberia	2(66.7%)	1(33.3%)	0(0.0%)	**3(100%)**
Mali	1(50.0%)	1(50.0%)	0(0.0%)	**2(100%)**
Niger	95(59.4%)	61(37.6%)	5(3.0%)	**161(100%)**
Nigeria	1(20.0%)	4(80.0%)	0(0.0%)	**5(100%)**
Senegal	1(100.0%)	0(0.0%)	0(0.0%)	**1(100%)**
Sierra Leone	2(50.0%)	2(50.0%)	0(0.0%)	**4(100%)**
The Gambia	0(0.0%)	2(100.0%)	0(0.0%)	**2(100%)**
Togo				
Total	**136(54.0%)**	**109(43.2%)**	**7(2.8%)**	**252(100%)**

	Sector			
	Public Governmental Sector	Non State	Regional/International Institutions	**Total**
Benin	1(20.0%)	1(20.0%)	3(60.0%)	**5(100%)**
Burkina Faso	0(0.0%)	0(0.0%)	4(100.0%)	**4(100%)**
Burundi	1(12.5%)	3(37.5%)	4(50.0%)	**8(100%)**
Cameroon	9(39.2%)	7(30.4%)	7(30.4%)	**23(100%)**
Cote d'Ivoire	1(6.7%)	9(60.0%)	5(33.3%)	**15(100%)**
Ethiopia	0(0.0%)	0(0.0%)	1(100.0%)	**1(100%)**
Ghana	2(50%)	2 (50%)	0(0.0%)	**4(100%)**
Guinea B	2(33.3%)	0(0.0%)	4(66.7%)	**6(100%)**
Kenya	1(50.0%)	0(0.0%)	1(50.0%)	**2(100%)**
Liberia	2(33.3%)	1(16.7%)	3(50.0%)	**6(100%)**
Mali	0(0.0%)	1(33.3%)	2(66.7%)	**3(100%)**
Niger	0(0.0%)	1(50.0%)	1(50.0%)	**2(100%)**
Nigeria	86(53.4%)	55(34.2%)	20(12.4%)	**161(100%)**
Senegal	0(0.0%)	2(40.0%)	3(60.0%)	**5(100%)**
Sierra Leone	0(0.0%)	0(0.0%)	1(100.0%)	**1(100%)**
The Gambia	1(12.5%)	2(50.0%)	1(12.5%)	**4(100%)**
Togo	1(50.0%)	1(50.0%)	0(0.0%)	**2(100%)**
Total	**107(42.5%)**	**85(33.7%)**	**60(23.8%)**	**252(100%)**

	Specific sector						
	Academic	Development	Legal/Human rights	NGO/ Humanitarian work.	Private work	Regional and Intern	**Total**

	and Media					ational work	Total
Benin	1(20.0%)	1(20.0%)	0(0.0%)	1(20.0%)	2(40.0%)	0(0.0%)	**5(100%)**
Burkina Faso	0(0.0%)	2(50.0%)	0(0.0%)	0(0.0%)	0(0.0%)	2(50.0%)	**4(100%)**
Burundi	2(25.0%)	1(12.5%)	3(37.5%)	0(0.0%)	0(0.0%)	1(12.5%)	**8(100%)**
Cameroon	3(13.1%)	1(4.3%)	9(39.0%)	4(17.4%)	1(12.5%)	3(13.1%)	**23(100%)**
Cote d'Ivoire	4(26.7%)	3(20.0%)	1(6.7%)	1(6.7%)	3(13.1%)	4(26.6%)	**15(100%)**
Ethiopia	0(0.0%)	0(0.0%)	0(0.0%)	0(0.0%)	2(13.3%)	1(100.0%)	**1(100%)**
Ghana	1(25%)	1(25%)	1(16.7%)	1(25%)	0(0.0%)	0(25%)	**4(100%)**
Guinea B	0(0.0%)	0(0.0%)	0(0.0%)	0(0.0%)	1(25%)	4(66.6%)	**6(100%)**
Kenya	1(50.0%)	0(0.0%)	1(16.7%)	0(0.0%)	1(16.7%)	1(50.0%)	**2(100%)**
Liberia	0(0.0%)	1(33.3%)	0(0.0%)	1(16.7%)	0(0.0%)	2(33.3%)	**6(100%)**
Mali	0(0.0%)	1(50.0%)	0(0.0%)	2(66.7%)	2(33.3%)	0(0.0%)	**3(100%)**
Niger	0(0.0%)	22(13.7%)	0(0.0%)	0(0.0%)	0(0.0%)	1(50.0%)	**2(100%)**
Nigeria	52(32.3%)	0(0.0%)	7(4.3%)	35(21.8%)	0(0.0%)	4(2.4%)	**161(100%)**
Senegal	0(0.0%)	0(0.0%)	1(20.0%)	0(0.0%)	41(25.5%)	2(40.0%)	**5(100%)**
Sierra Leone	0(0.0%)	1(25%)	0(0.0%)	1(100.0%)	2(40.0%)	0(0.0%)	**1(100%)**
The Gambia	2(50.0%)	1(50.0%)	0(0.0%)	1(25.0%)	0(0.0%)	0(0.0%)	**4(100%)**
Togo	0(0.0%)	0(0.0%)	0(0.0%)	1(50.0%)	0(0.0%)	0(0.0%)	**2(100%)**
Total	**66(26.2%)**	**35(13.9%)**	**23(9.1%)**	**48(19.1%)**	**55(21.8%)**	**25(9.9%)**	**252(100%)**

	Region		Total
	Central Africa	West Africa	
Benin	0(0.0%)	5(100%)	**5(100%)**
Burkina	0(0.0%)	4(100%)	**4(100%)**
Faso	8(100%)	0(0.0%)	**8(100%)**
Burundi	23(100%)	0(0.0%)	**23(100%)**
Cameroo	0(0.0%)	15(100%)	**15(100%)**
n	0(0.0%)	1(100%)	**1(100%)**
Cote	0(0.0%)	4(100%)	**4(100%)**
d'Ivoire	0(0.0%)	6(100%)	**6(100%)**
Ethiopia	0(0.0%)	2(100%)	**2(100%)**
Ghana	0(0.0%)	6(100%)	**6(100%)**
Guinea B	0(0.0%)	3(100%)	**3(100%)**
Kenya	0(0.0%)	2(100%)	**2(100%)**

Liberia	0(0.0%)	165(100%)	**161(100%)**
Mali	0(0.0%)	5(100%)	**5(100%)**
Niger	0(0.0%)	1(100%)	**1(100%)**
Nigeria	0(0.0%)	4(100%)	**4(100%)**
Senegal	0(0.0%)	2(100%)	**2(100%)**
Sierra Leone	**31(12.3%)**	**221(87.7%)**	**252(100%)**
The Gambia			
Togo			
Total			

|	How prevalent are conflicts in your country?			
	Highly prevalent	Prevalent	Not Prevalent	**Total**
Benin	0(0.0%)	5(100.0%)	0(0.0%)	**5(100%)**
Burkina Faso	2(50.0%)	0(0.0%)	2(50.0%)	**4(100%)**
Burundi	2(25.0%)	0(0.0%)	6(75.0%)	**8(100%)**
Cameroon	15(65.2%)	0(0.0%)	8(34.8%)	**23(100%)**
Cote d'Ivoire	2(13.3%)	2(13.3%)	11(73.4%)	**15(100%)**
Ethiopia	1(100.0%)	0(0.0%)	0(0.0%)	**1(100%)**
Ghana	2(50%)	2(50%)	0(0.0%)	**4(100%)**
Guinea B	3(50.0%)	0(0.0%)	3(50.0%)	**6(100%)**
Kenya	0(0.0%)	0(0.0%)	2(100.0%)	**2(100%)**
Liberia	0(0.0%)	1(16.7%)	5(83.3%)	**6(100%)**
Mali	1(33.3%)	0(0.0%)	2(66.7%)	**3(100%)**
Niger	0(0.0%)	1(50.0%)	1(50.0%)	**2(100%)**
Nigeria	92(57.0%)	2(1.2%)	67(41.8%)	**161(100%)**
Senegal	0(0.0%)	3(60.0%)	2(40.0%)	**5(100%)**
Sierra Leone	0(0.0%)	1(100.0%)	0(0.0%)	**1(100%)**
The Gambia	1(25.0%)	2(50.0%)	1(25.0%)	**4(100%)**
Togo	1(50.0%)	0(0.0%)	1(50.0%)	**2(100%)**
Total	**122(48.4%)**	**19(7.5%)**	**111(44%)**	**252(100%)**

Source: Field Survey, 2020.

Table 1 above shows the demographic characteristics of the respondents and the data shows that 67.1% of the respondents across the 17 countries are male, while 32.9% of the respondents are female. This shows that majority (67.1%) of the respondents are male. In terms of age category of the respondents, the data shows that 17.1% of the respondents across the 17 countries are within the age bracket of 18-27years, 41.3% of the respondents are within the age bracket of 28-37years, 20.6% of the respondents are within the age bracket of 38-47years, 12.3% of the respondents are within the age bracket of 48-57years, while 8.7% of the respondents are within the age bracket of 58years and above, this implies that higher percentage (41.3%) of the respondents are within the age bracket of 28-37years.

With regards to the marital status of the respondents, 2% of the respondents are divorced, 52% of them are married, 1.2% of the respondents are separated, 43.2% of the respondents are single, while 1.6% of the respondents are widowed, this shows that majority (52%) of the respondents are married. The distribution of the respondents according to their highest educational qualification shows that 2.8% of the respondents have secondary education as their highest level of educational qualification, 43.2% of the respondents across the 17 countries have tertiary education as their highest level of educational qualification, while 54% of the respondents have post tertiary educational qualification (which includes masters, post-graduate diploma, masters, masters of philosophy and doctor of philosophy) as their highest level of educational qualification, this implies that majority (54%) of the respondents have post-tertiary education as their highest educational qualification.

The distribution of the respondents according to their sector, shows that 42.5% of the respondents works in government/public sector, 33.7% of the respondents works in non-state sector while 23.8% of the respondents works in regional/international institution, this shows that higher percentage (42.5%) of the respondents works in government/public sector. The distribution of the respondents according to their specific sector shows that 26.2% of the respondents works in the academic and media sector, 13.9% of the respondents works in the development sector, 9.1% of the respondents works in the legal/human rights sector, 19.1% of the respondents works in NGO/Humanitarian sector, 21.8% of the respondents works in the private sector while 9.9% of the respondents works in the regional/international sector. The distribution of the respondents according to their regions shows that 12.3% of the respondents are from Central African region while 87.7% of the respondents are from West African region, this implies that majority (87.7%) of the respondents are from West African region while Central African region is 12.3%, this shows that majority of the respondents (87.7%) of the respondents are from West Africa region.
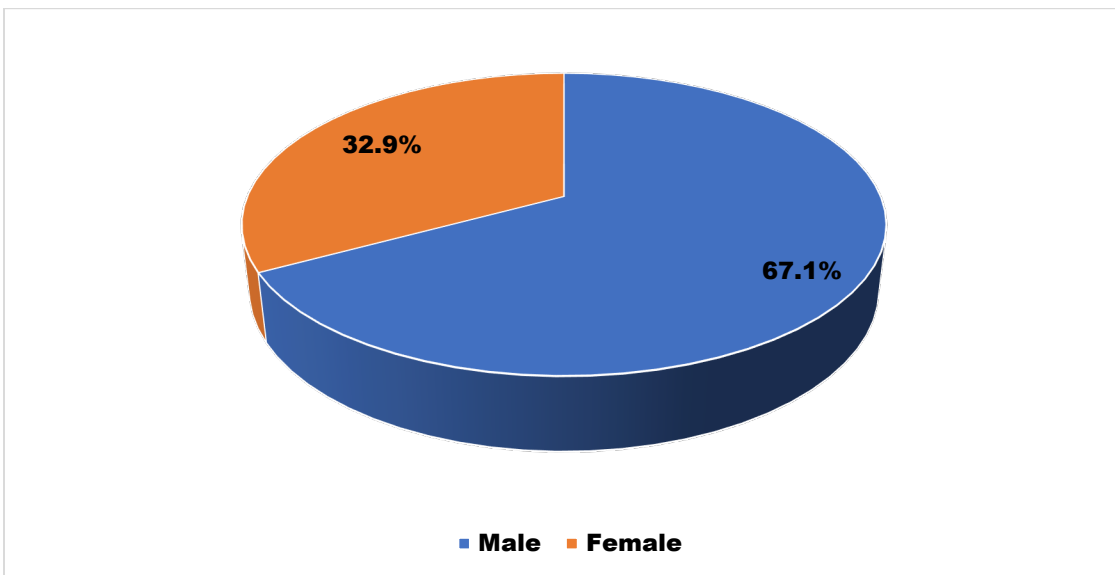
Figure 1: A bar chart showing distribution of respondents by country
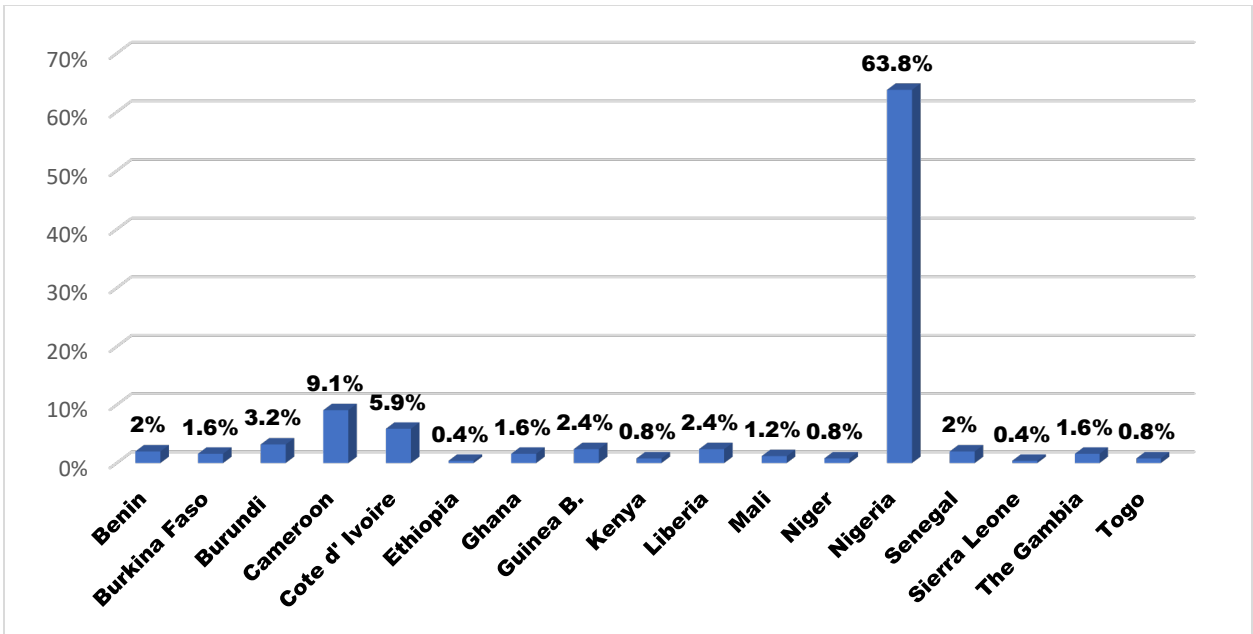
Source: Field Survey, 2020

Figure 1 above shows the distribution of the respondents by country. The data shows that 2% of the respondents are from Benin, 1.6% are from Burkina Faso, 3.2% are from Burundi, 9.1% of the respondents are from Cameroon, 5.9% are from Cote d' Ivoire, 0.4% of the respondents are from Ethiopia, 1.6% of them are Ghana, 2.4% are from Guinea B., 0.8% are from Kenya, 2.4% are from Liberia, 1.2% are from Mali, 0.8% are from Niger, 63.8% are from Nigeria, 2% are from Senegal, 0.4% are from Sierra Leone, 1.6% are from The Gambia while 0.8% are from Togo.

Figure 2: A pie chart showing distribution of respondents by gender

Figure 2 above shows a pie chart distribution of the respondents by gender and it shows that 32.9% of the respondents are female while 67.1% of the respondents are male, and that implies that majority (67.1%) of the respondents are male.

Figure 3: A bar chart showing distribution of respondents by age category.
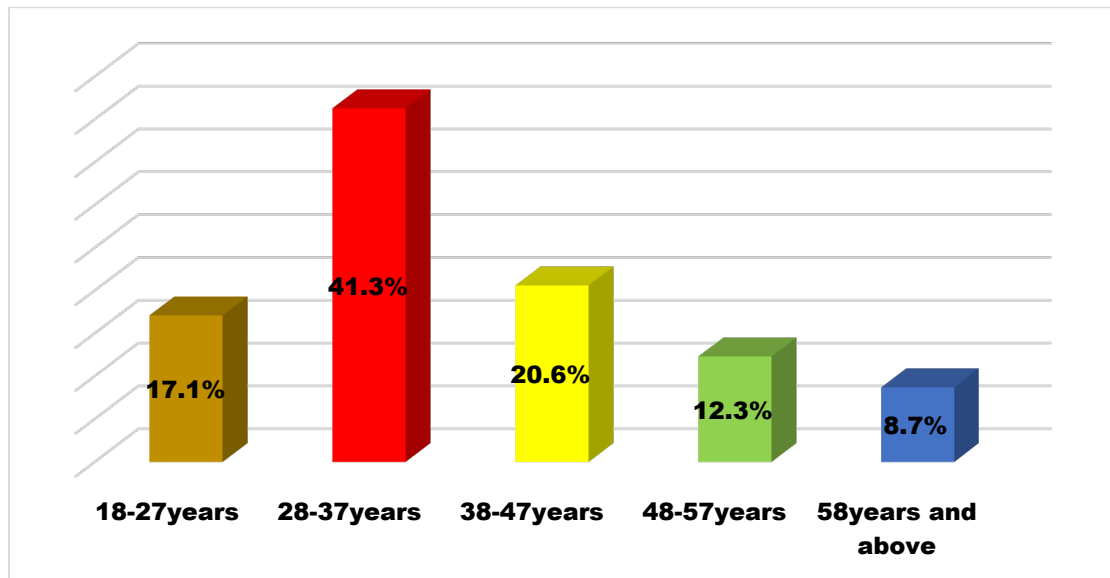
Figure 4 above which showcases the distribution of the respondents according to their age shows that 17.1% of the are respondents are within the age bracket of 18-27years, 41.3% of the respondents are within the age bracket of 28-37years, 20.6% of the respondents are within the age bracket of 38-47years, 12.3% of the respondents are between the ages of 48-57years, while 8.7% of the respondents are 58years and above. This shows that higher percentage (41.3%) of the respondents are within the ages of 28-37years.

Figure 4: A bar chart showing the distribution of respondents on the prevalence of violent conflict, tension and protracted conflicts in their country.
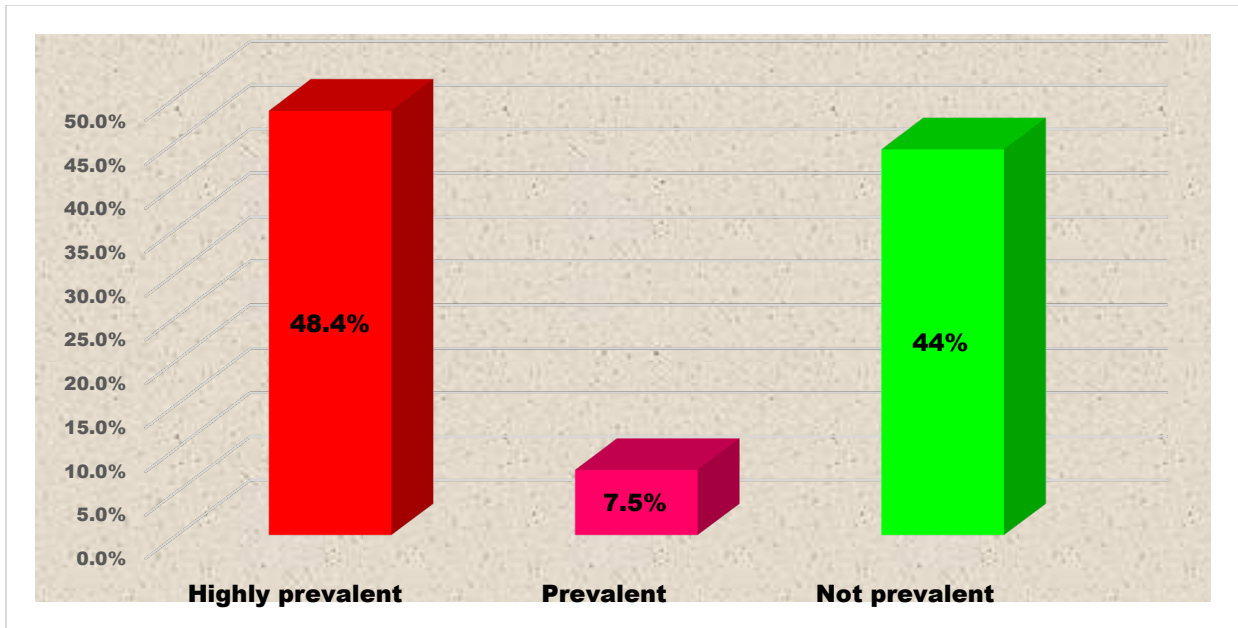
Figure 4 above shows the distribution of the respondents on the prevalence of violent conflict, tension and protracted conflicts in their country, the data shows that 48.4% of the respondents opined that violent conflict, tension and protract conflicts are very prevalent in their country, 7.5% said that violent conflict, tension and protracted conflicts are prevalent in their country while 44% of the respondents were of the opinion that violent conflict, tension and protracted conflicts are not prevalent in their country.

Table 2: Respondents opinion on the prevention and resolution approaches employed in their country to tackle these conflicts

Prevention and Resolution approaches employed	Frequency	Percentage
No prevention and resolution approaches in my country	51	20.3%
"Cosmetic resolution" approaches that does not aim at solving the conflicts	28	11.1%
Deployment of the military/security agents	37	14.7%
Dialogue and negotiations	5	2%
Advocacy on peace building	3	1.2%
Amnesty programs	7	2.8%
Early warning response mechanism	4	1.6%

None, rather government deploys military and security personnel to intimidate the general populace	39	15.5%
No effective approach	23	9.1%
Placement of curfew are the most prevalent government approaches towards tackling conflicts	18	7.1%
Reconciliation, community conflict management/arbitration	5	2%
Forum for post-crisis and inter-community reconciliation	3	1.2%
Threats, intimidation and repression by government and security agents	29	11.5%
Total	**252**	**100%**

Source: Field Survey, 2020

Table 2 above shows the respondents opinion on the prevention and resolution approaches employed in their various countries, the result shows that 20.3% of the respondents opined that there is no prevention and resolution approaches in their country, 11.% of the respondents opined that there is "cosmetic resolution" approaches that does not aim at solving the conflicts in their country, 14.7% of the respondents stated that deployment of the military and other security agents are the prevention and resolution approaches employed in their country, 2% of the respondents opined that dialogue and negotiations are the prevention and resolution approaches employed in their country to tackle conflicts, 1.2% of the respondents stated that advocacy on peace building is the prevention and resolution approaches employed in their country, 1.6% of the respondents stated that amnesty programs are the prevention and resolution approaches employed, 15.5% of the respondents opined that there is no prevention and resolution employed in their country, rather government deploys military and security personnel to intimidate the general populace, 9.1% of the respondents said there is no effective approach employed, 7.1% said placement of curfew are the most prevalent government approaches towards tackling conflicts, 2% of the respondents said that reconciliation, community conflict management/arbitration are the prevention and resolution approaches employed in their country, 1.2% of the respondents are of the opinion that forum for post-crisis and inter-community reconciliation are the prevention and resolution approaches employed while 11.5% of the respondents stated that threats, intimidation and repression by government and security agents. The data further shows that higher percentage (20.3%) of the respondents opined that there is no prevention and resolution approaches employed in their country to tackle these conflicts.

Section B: Peace and Security in West and Central Africa

This section dealt with peace and security threats in West and Central Africa, rating of peace and security by the respondents, factors underlying peace and security threats in West and Central Africa, how Covid-19 Pandemic affected safety and security among other cogent issues that were analyzed in this section.

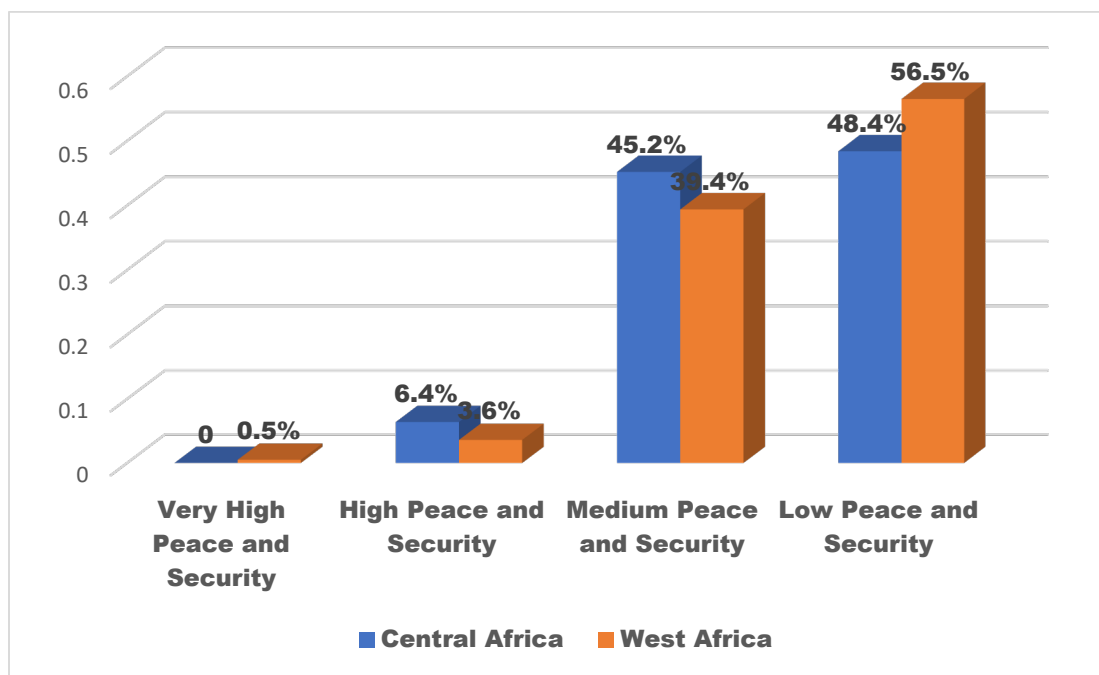**Table 3: Rating of peace and security situation by respondents country**

How do you rate peace and security situation in the West and Central Africa subregion					
	High	Low	Medium	Very High	Total
Benin	0(0.0%)	4(80.0%)	1(20.0%)	0(0.0%)	**5(100%)**
Burkina Faso	0(0.0%)	3(60.0%)	1(20.0%)	0(0.0%)	**4(100%)**
Burundi	0(0.0%)	5(62.5%)	3(37.5%)	0(0.0%)	**8(100%)**
Cameroon	2(8.7%)	9(39.1%)	12(52.2%)	0(0.0%)	**23(100%)**
Cote d'Ivoire	1(6.6%)	7(46.7%)	7(46.7%)	0(0.0%)	**15(100%)**
Ethiopia	0(0.0%)	0(0.0%)	1(100.0%)	0(0.0%)	**1(100%)**
Guinea B	0(0.0%)	2(33.3%)	4(66.7%)	0(0.0%)	**6(100%)**
Kenya	0(0.0%)	1(50.0%)	1(50.0%)	0(0.0%)	**2(100%)**
Liberia	0(0.0%)	3(50.0%)	3(50.0%)	0(0.0%)	**6(100%)**
Mali	0(0.0%)	3(100.0%)	0(0.0%)	0(0.0%)	**3(100%)**
Niger	0(0.0%)	2(100.0%)	0(0.0%)	0(0.0%)	**2(100%)**
Nigeria	7(4.2%)	96(58.2%)	61(37.6)	1(0.6%)	**165(100%)**
Senegal	0(0.0%)	1(20.0%)	4(80.0%)	0(0.0%)	**5(100%)**
Sierra Leone	0(0.0%)	0(0.0%)	1(100.0%)	0(0.0%)	**1(100%)**
The Gambia	0(0.0%)	1(25.0%)	3(75.0%)	0(0.0%)	**4(100%)**
Togo	0(0.0%)	1(50.0%)	1(50.0%)	0(0.0%)	**2(100%)**
Total	**10(4.0%)**	**138(54.8%)**	**103(40.8%)**	**1(0.4%)**	**252(100%)**

Source: Field Survey, 2020

Majority (80%) of the respondents in Benin rated peace and security low in their country, Majority (60%) of the respondents in Burkina Faso rated the peace and security issue in their country as low, majority (62.5%) of the respondents in Burundi rated peace and security situation in their country as low, majority (52.2%) of the respondents in Cameroon rated peace and security issues in their country as medium, higher percentage of the respondents in Cote d'Ivoire (46.7%) rated peace and security situation as low and medium respectively, majority (100% of the respondents in Ethiopia rated peace and security situation in their country as medium, majority (66.7%) of the respondents from Guinea B. rated peace and security situation in their country as medium, majority (50%) of the respondents in Kenya rated peace and security

situation in their country as low and medium respectively. Higher percentage (50%) of the respondents in Liberia rated the peace and security situation in their country as low and medium respectively. In Mali, majority (100%) of the respondents rated the peace and security situation in their country as low. In Niger, majority (100%) of the respondents rated the peace and security situation in their country as low. In Nigeria, majority (58.2%) of the respondents rated peace and security situation in their country as low. In Senegal, majority (80%) rated peace and security situation in their country as medium. In Sierra Leone, majority (100%) of the respondents rated peace and security situation in their country as medium. In Gambia, majority (75%) of the respondents rated the peace and security situation in their country as medium. In Togo. 50% of the respondents rated the peace and security in their country as low and medium respectively. This shows that majority of the countries in West and Central Africa rated the peace and security in their country as low.

Figure 5: A bar chart showing respondents rating of peace and security in their sub region

Source: Field Survey, 2020

Figure 5 showcases the rating of the respondents on peace and security issues in their country, the result shows that in West Africa sub region, only 0.5% of the respondents rated the peace and security situation in their region to as very high, 3.6% rated it to be high, 39.4% rated it as

medium while 56.5% rated it to be low, this shows that majority (56.5%) rated the peace and security situation in their sub region as low. Similarly, in Central Africa, 6.4% of the respondents rated the peace and security situation in their sub region as high, 45.2% rated it as medium while 48.4% of the respondents rated the peace and security situation in their sub region as low. This is an indication that higher percentage (48.4%) of the respondents in Central Africa rated the peace and conflict situation in their country as low. This implies that in both West and Central Africa countries, peace and security is low.

Figure 6: A bar chart showing threats to peace and security in West and Central Africa countries according to the respondents.
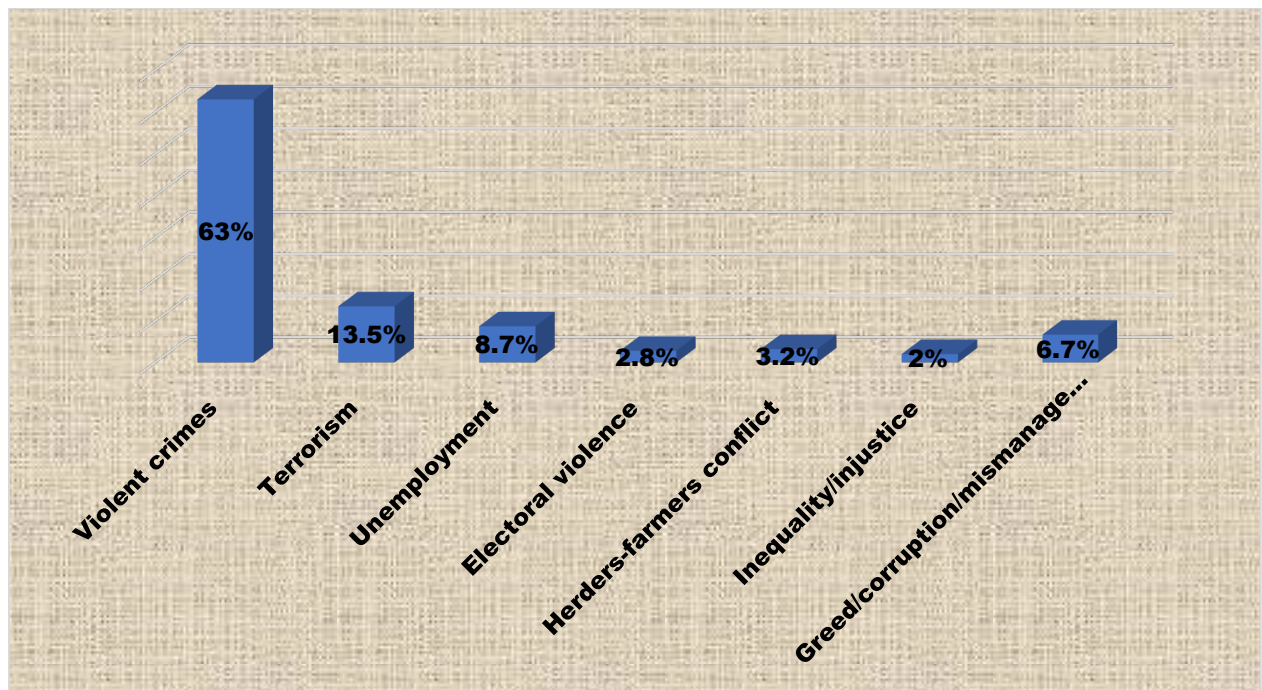

Figure 6 is a bar chart showing peace and security threats in West and Central Africa countries, the result shows that 63% of the respondents across the 17 countries states that violent crimes is the major threat to peace and security in their country, 13.5% of the respondents opined that terrorism is a major threat to the peace and security in their country, 8.7% of the respondents stated that unemployment is the major peace and security threat in their country, 2.8% of the respondents were of the opinion that electoral violence is a major threat to peace and security in their country, 3.2% of the respondents stated that herder-farmers conflict is major threat to peace and conflict in their country, 2% of the respondents were of the opinion that

inequality/injustice is the major threat to peace and security in their country, 6.7% of the respondents opined that greed/corruption and mismanagement is the major threat to peace and security in their country. This is an indication that violent crimes is the major threat to peace and security in West and Central Africa.

Table 4: Peace and Security threats that are prevalent in your country

Country	Peace and security threats that are prevalent in their country.
Benin	Terrorism, Violent crimes/extremism, local conflicts and unemployment
Burkina Faso	Terrorism, violent extremism, injustice, maritime piracy
Burundi	Inter-community conflicts, electoral violence, violent crimes, corruption
Cameroon	Terrorism, corruption, electoral violence, violent crimes
Cote d'Ivoire	Terrorism, electoral violence, corruption, violent crimes
Ethiopia	Violent crime, Inequality; corruption; unemployment; and lack of job opportunities for skilled persons, especially university graduates.
Ghana	Electoral violence, violent crimes, unemployment
Guinea B	Political instability, corruption/mismanagement, drug trafficking
Kenya	Violent crimes, armed robbery, community violence
Liberia	Social inequality, absence of good governance, corruption and lack of inclusive development
Mali	Civil-war, risks, military coup, kidnapping, assassinations, terrorism, intercommunity violence, ethnic violence
Niger	Terrorism, human rights abuse, unemployment
Nigeria	Terrorism, Armed robbery, banditry, kidnapping, human rights abuse, cattle rustling, farmer-herders conflict, unemployment, corruption, electoral violence, police brutality
Senegal	Terrorism, smuggling, unemployment
Sierra Leone	Governance deficits, human rights abuse, rising political tensions
The Gambia	Smuggling, police brutality, unemployment
Togo	Smuggling, electoral violence, injustice, corruption

Source: Field Survey, 2020

Table 4 shows presented peace and security threat that are prevalent to respondents' countries and it was obvious that terrorism and violent crimes were the major threats to countries in West Africa. Moreover, corruption, unemployment, human rights abuses, kidnapping for ransom, cattle rustling, and farmers-herders conflict were more peculiar to Nigeria and its neighbouring West African countries.

Figure 7: Respondents opinion on the factors that encourages/promotes the threats to peace and security in their countries
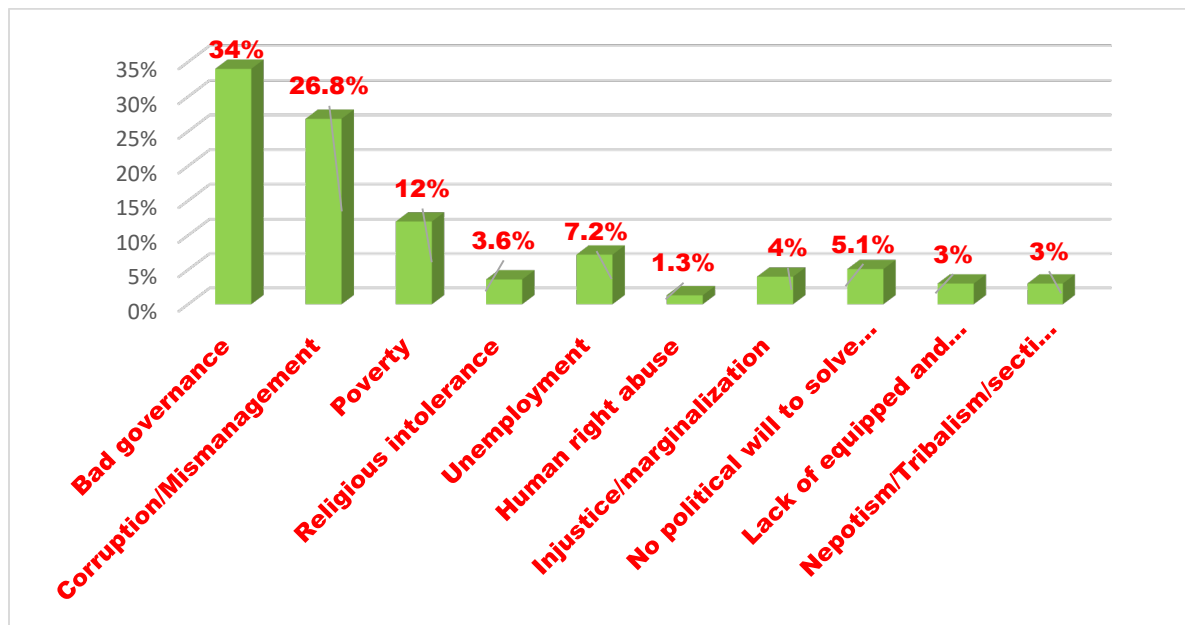
Source: Field Survey, 2020

Figure 7 presents respondents opinion on the factors that encourage/promotes threats to peace and security in their countries, the data shows that 34% of the respondents were of the opinion that bad governance is the major threat to peace and security, 26.8% of the respondents opined that corruption and mismanagement are the factors that encourage peace and security, 12% stated that poverty was the major factor promoting peace and security, 3.6% of the respondents stated that religious intolerance was the major factor promoting threats to peace and security, 7.2% of the respondents opined that unemployment was the major factor encouraging threats to peace and security, 1.3% of the respondents stated that human right abuse is the major factor promoting threats to peace and security, 4% of the respondents opined that injustice/marginalization are the major factors promoting threat to peace and security, 5.1% of the respondents stated that lack of political will to find solve peace and security problems are the major factors promoting threats to peace and security, 3% of the respondents stated that lack of equipped and effective security agents are the factors encouraging threats to peace and security, while 3% of the respondents were of the opinion that nepotism, tribalism and

sectionalism were the major factors promoting threats to peace and security. From the above data, it is evident that bad governance is the major factor promoting threats to peace and security in West and Central Africa.

Table 5: Respondents opinion on whether Covid-19 affected their safety and security

Has the Covid-19 pandemic affected your safety and security?				
	Yes	No	Indifference	**Total**
Benin	2(80.0%)	2(80.0%)	1(20.0%)	5(100%)
Burkina	3(75.0%)	1(25.0%)	0(0.0%)	4(100%)
Faso	3(37.5%)	2(25.0%)	3(37.5%)	8(100%)
Burundi	7(30.4%)	2(8.7%)	14(60.9%)	23(100%)
Cameroon	5(33.3%)	8(53.4%)	2(13.3%)	15(100%)
Cote	0(0.0%)	0(0.0%)	1(100.0%)	1(100%)
d'Ivoire	3(75%)	1(25%)	0(0.0%)	4(100%)
Ethiopia	1(16.7%)	2(33.3%)	3(50.0%)	6(100%)
Ghana	1(50.0%)	1(50.0%)	0(0.0%)	2(100%)
Guinea B	4(66.7%)	0(0.0%)	2(33.3%)	6(100%)
Kenya	1(33.3%)	1(33.3%)	1(33.3%)	3(100%)
Liberia	0(0.0%)	2(100.0%)	0(0.0%)	2(100%)
Mali	88(54.7%)	34(21.1%)	39(24.2%)	161(100%)
Niger	2(40.0%)	2(40.0%)	1(20.0%)	5(100%)
Nigeria	0(0.0%)	1(100.0%)	0(0.0%)	1(100%)
Senegal	3(75.0%)	1(25.0%)	0(0.0%)	4(100%)
Sierra	1(50.0%)	0(0.0%)	1(50.0%)	2(100%)
Leone				
The				
Gambia				
Togo				
Total	**68(27.0%)**	**60(23.8%)**	**124(49.2%)**	**252(100%)**

Source: Field Survey, 2020

Figure 8: Respondents opinion on whether Covid-19 affected their safety and security
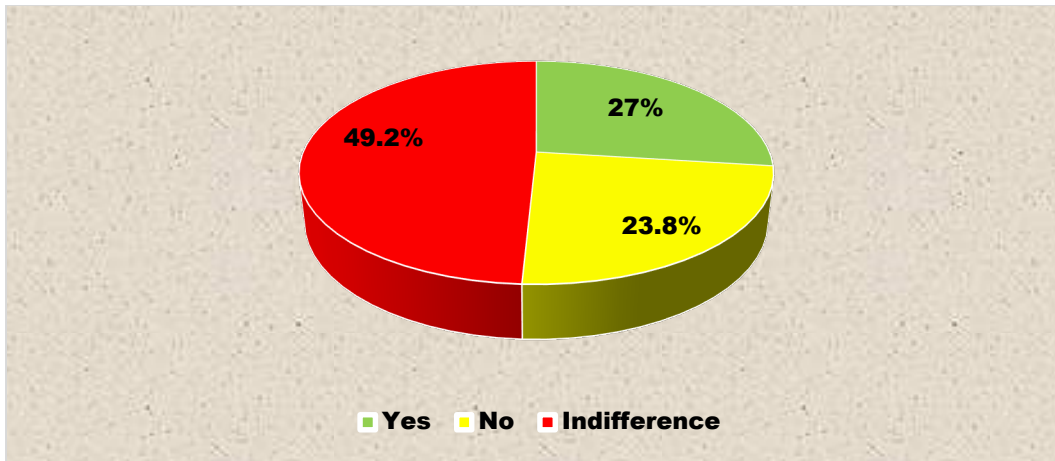
Source: Field Survey, 2020

Figure 8 is a pie chart showcasing respondents opinion on whether Covid-19 affected their safety and security, the result shows that 27% of the respondents said yes, that Covid-19 affected their safety and security, 23.8% of the respondents said no that Covid-19 didn't affect their safety and security while 49.2% of the respondents were indifference on whether Covid-19 affected their safety and security.

Table 6: Respondents opinion on how they were affected by Covid-19

Covid-19 lockdown aggravated poverty which led to crime and insecurity
The Covid-19 lockdown caused increase in crime rate and insecurity as people tried to survive by all means
Borders were poorly guarded exposing all cities and to the Corona Virus from those travelling in and out of the country
It aggravated the unemployment rate and food security
It increased hunger and hardship in our country
Burglary increased during the Covid-19 lockdown
High cost of goods and services
Hoodlum were stealing in broad day light which increased our fear
It increased robbery, theft, shoplifting and burglary
It increased job loss and unemployment
Increase in different uprising due to hunger and reduction in earning power

Extortion and brutality from security agents enforcing the Covid-19 lockdown
Shut down of the economic, religious and educational sector which led to high rate of crime

Source: Field Survey, 2020

Table 6 shows the specific ways respondents Covid-19 affected respondents safety and security. From the table, it was glaring that the Covid-19 lockdown led to increase crime rate which affected the respondents' safety and security in diverse forms.

Table 7: Respondents opinion on whether fear of the police and other security agents is a major concern in their community and country

Is the fear of the police force from the Police and other security agents a major concern in your community?		
Response	**Frequency**	**Percentages**
Yes	180	71.4%
No	46	18.3%
Indifferent	26	10.3%
Total	**252**	**100%**

Source: Field Survey, 2020

Table 7 above shows respondents opinion on whether fear of the police and other security agents is major concern in their community and country, the data shows that 71.4% of the respondents said yes, that the fear of police force and other security agents is a major concern in their community and country, 18.3% of the respondents said no that the fear of police is not a major concern in their community and country, while 10.3% of the respondents were indifferent on whether the fear of police and other security agents is a major concern in their community and country. This shows that majority (71.4%) of the respondents opined that the fear of police and other security agents is a major concerns in their community and country.

Table 8: Respondents opinion on why they are afraid of the Police and other security agents in their country

Extra-judicial killings
Arbitrary arrest and extortion by the Police
Human rights violations by the Police and other security agents
Police and other security agents act with impunity and have no regard for rule of law
Police use to "frame-up" innocent citizens just to extort money from them
High level of corruption in the police, they can do anything to get money
High handedness of the police
They are brutal and uses excessive force/violence
Innocent citizens are profiled as criminals to extort money from them
The police harass innocent citizens at will
The police don't have respect for human life
Because the police are armed, they can shoot innocent citizens and nothing will happen to them
They are lawless and easily get away with crime committed against innocent citizens
They are more dangerous than the terrorists due to their unprofessional behaviour and wickedness

Source: Field Survey, 2020

Table 8 showcases reasons why respondents are afraid of the police and other security agents in their country, the reasons includes police brutality, extortion, arbitrary arrest, extra-judicial killings, lack of respect for human rights and human life.

Figure 9: Respondents opinion on whether terrorism pose an immediate challenge to them and their household in their country
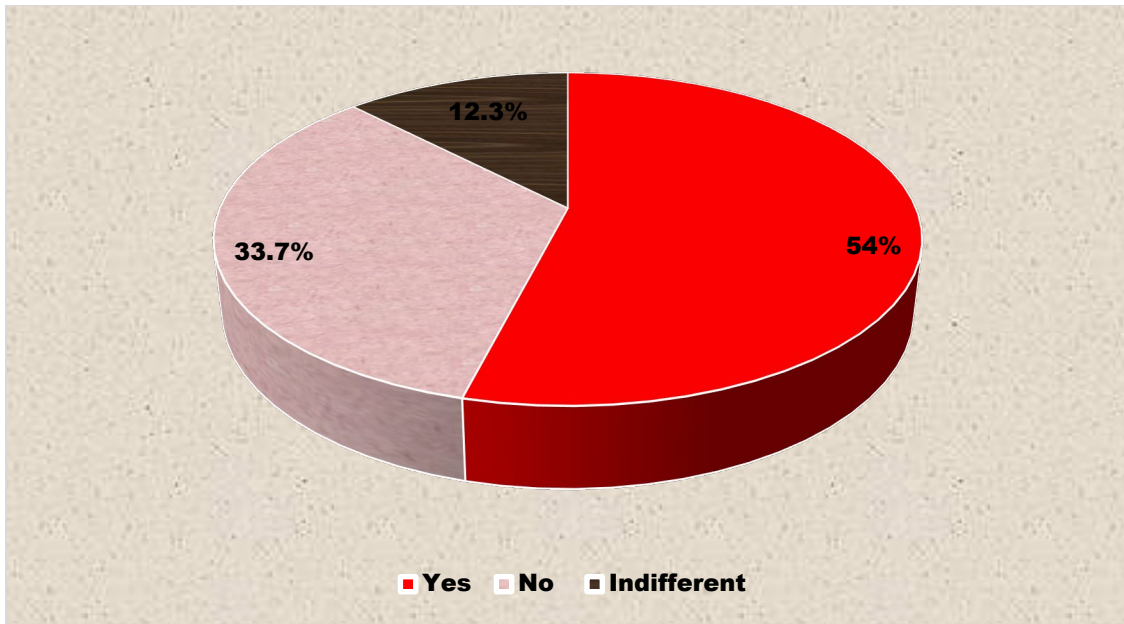
Source: Field Survey, 2020

Figure 9 presents respondents opinion on whether terrorism pose an immediate challenge to them and their household in their country, the result shows that 54% of the respondents said yes that terrorism pose an immediate to them and their household in their country, 33.7% of the respondents said no that terrorism does not pose an immediate challenge to them and their household in their while 12.3% of the respondents were indifferent on whether terrorism pose an immediate challenge to them and their household in their country. This implies that terrorism pose an immediate challenge to the majority of the respondents in West Africa.

Table 9: Respondents' opinion on whether corruption and lack of transparency are the greatest threat to achieving peace and security

Is corruption and lack of transparency the greatest threat to achieving peace and security?		
Responses	**Frequency**	**Percentages**
Strongly agree	169	67.1%
Agree	66	26.2%
Neither agree nor disagree	15	6.0%
Disagree	2	0.8%
Total	**252**	**100%**

Table 9 above presents respondents' opinion on whether corruption and lack of transparency are the greatest threat to achieving peace and security, the result shows that 67.1% of the respondents agreed that corruption and lack of transparent are the greatest threat to achieving peace and security, 26.2% of the respondents agreed that lack of transparency are the greatest threat to achieving peace and security, 6% of the respondents neither agreed nor disagreed that lack of transparency are the greatest threat to achieving peace and security while 0.8% of the respondents disagreed that lack of transparency are the greatest threat to achieving peace and security, this implies that majority (67.1%) of the respondents strongly agreed that corruption and transparency are the greatest threat to achieving peace and security in West Africa.

Figure 10: Respondents opinion on how many times them or their household have been a victim of insecurity in the past 12months preceding this study
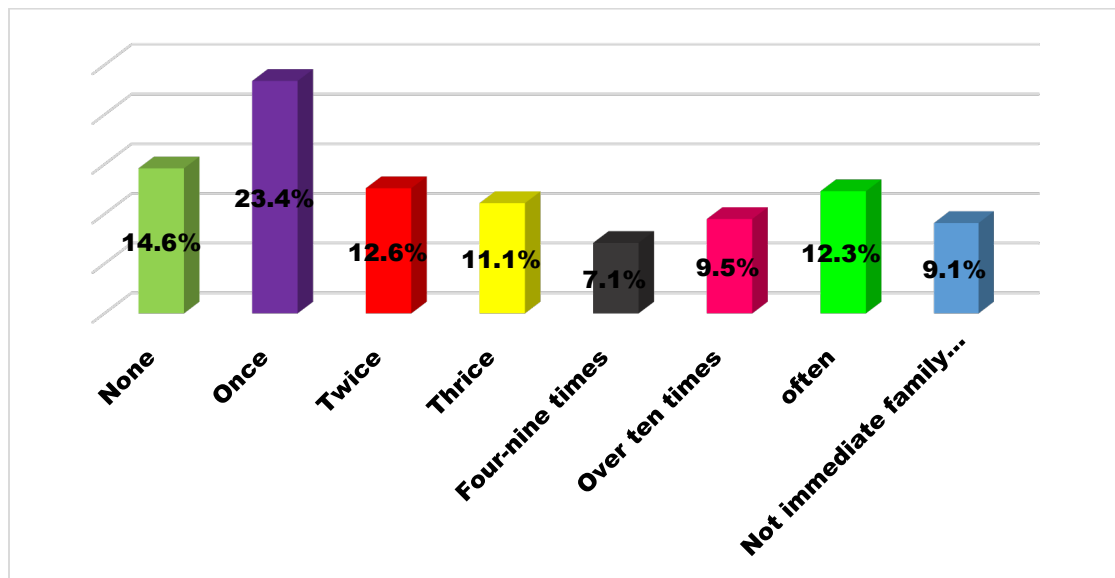
Figure 10 above shows respondents opinion on how many times them or their household have been a victim of insecurity in the past 12months preceding this study, the result shows that 14.6% of the respondent said them nor their household have not been victims of insecurity in the past 12months preceding this study, 23.4% said they have been victim once, 12.6% said they have been victims twice, 11.1% said they have been victims thrice, 7.1% of the respondents said they have been victims of insecurity within 4-9times in the past 12months preceding this study, 9.5% said they have been victims over ten times, 12.3% said they have been victim often, while 9.1% said that them or their immediate family have not been but their neighbours and friend have been victims in the past 12 months preceding this study, this implies that higher percentage (23.4%) of the respondents have been victims of insecurity once in the past 12months preceding this study.

Table 10: Respondents opinion on how often people suffer loss of properties, assets or investments as a result of insecurity issues in their country/community.

How often do people suffer loss of properties, assets or investments as a result of insecurity issues in their country/community?					
	Very often	**Often**	**Not very often**	**Rarely**	**Total**
Benin	0(0.0%)	3(60.0%)	1(20.0%)	1(20.0%	**5(100%)**
Burkina	1(25.0%)	2(50.0%)	1(25.0%)	)	**4(100%)**
Faso	1(12.5%)	2(25.0%)	5(62.5%)	0(0.0%)	**8(100%)**
Burundi	11(47.8%)	7(30.4%)	4(17.4%)	0(0.0%)	**23(100%)**
Cameroo	4(26.7%)	6(40.0%)	4(26.7%)	1(4.3%)	**15(100%)**
n	0(0.0%)	0(0.0%)	0(0.0%)	1(6.6%)	**1(100%)**
Cote	2(50%)	2(50%)		1(100%)	**4(100%)**
d'Ivoire	1(16.7%)	2(33.3%)	0(0.0%)	0(0.0%)	**6(100%)**
Ethiopia	1(50.0%)	0(0.0%)	2(33.3%)	1(16.7%	**2(100%)**
Ghana	1(16.7%)	5(83.3%)	1(50.0%)	)	**6(100%)**
Guinea B	2(66.7%)	1(33.3%)	0(0.0%)	0(0.0%)	**3(100%)**
Kenya	1(50.0%)	0(0.0%)	0(0.0%)	0(0.0%)	**2(100%)**
Liberia	74(45.9%)		1(50.0%)	0(0.0%)	

Mali	0(0.0%)	63(39.1%)	22(13.3%)	0(0.0%)	161(100%)
Niger	1(100.0%)			2(1.2%)	
Nigeria	0(0.0%)	3(60.0%)	0(0.0%)	2(40.0%)	5(100%)
Senegal	0(0.0%)	0(0.0%)	0(0.0%)		1(100%)
Sierra Leone		2(50.0%)	1(25.0%)	0(0.0%)	4(100%)
The Gambia		1(50.0%)	1(50.0%)	1(25.0%)	2(100%)
Togo				0(0.0%)	
Total	**100(39.7%)**	**99(39.2%)**	**43(17.1%)**	**10(4.0%)**	**252(100%)**

Source: Field Survey, 2020

Table 10 shows respondents opinion on how often people suffer loss of properties, assets or investments as a result of insecurity issues in their community/country, the result shows that majority (60%) said they often suffer loss, majority (50%) in Burkina Faso said they often suffer loss, majority (62.5%) said they not very often suffer loss, higher percentage (47.8%) in Cameroon said they very often suffer loss, higher percentage (40%) in Cote d' Ivoire said they often suffer loss, majority (100%) in Ethiopia said they rarely suffer loss, in Ghana (50%) of the respondents opined that they very often and often suffer loss respectively, in Liberia, majority (83.3%) of the respondents often suffer loss, majority of the respondents (66.7%) in Mali very often suffer loss, majority of the respondents (50%) very often suffer loss in Niger, higher percentage (45.9%)of the respondents in Nigeria very often suffer loss, majority (60%) of the respondents in Senegal often suffer loss, majority (100%) of the respondents in Sierra Leone very often suffer loss, in Gambia, majority (50%) often suffer loss, in Togo, 50% of the respondents said they often suffer loss while another 50% said they suffer loss not very often. This shows that most of the countries in West Africa very often and often suffer loss of properties, assets or investment as a result of insecurity issues in their community and country.

Figure 11: Respondents' opinion on whether the fear of crime and insecurity affect business activities in their country/community
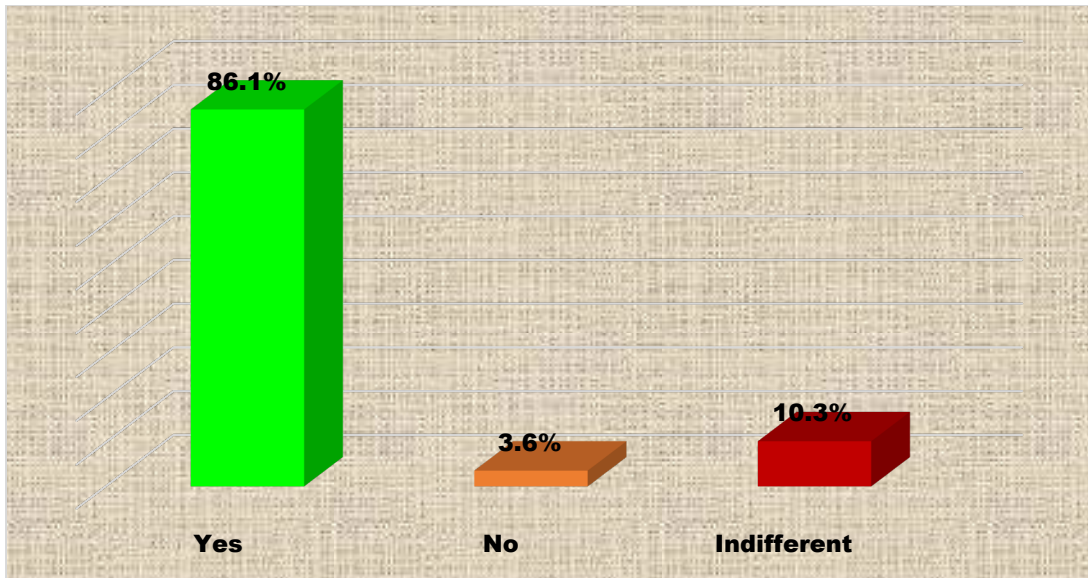
Source: Field Survey, 2020

Figure 11 is a bar chart showing respondents opinion on whether the fear of crime and insecurity affect business activities in their community and country, the result shows that 86.1% of the respondents said yes, that the fear of crime and insecurity affect business activities in their country/community, 3.6% of the respondents said no that the fear of crime and insecurity does not affect business activities in their community and country, while 10.3% of the respondents were indifferent to whether the fear of crime and insecurity affect business activities in their community and country. This implies that majority (86.1%) of the respondents said yes that fear of crime and insecurity affect business activities in their community and country.

Table 11: Respondents opinion on how much they trust the state security system

Country	How much do you trust the state security system?			
	High trust	Low trust	Don't trust them at all	Total

Benin	1(20.0%)	4(80.0%)	0(0.0%)	5(100%)
Burkina Faso	1(25.0%)	3(75.0%)	0(0.0%)	4(100%)
Burundi	0(0.0%)	4(50.0%)	4(50.0%)	8(100%)
Cameroon	2(8.7%)	15(65.2%)	6(26.1%)	23(100%)
Cote d'Ivoire	2(13.3%)	9(60.0%)	4(26.7%)	15(100%)
Ethiopia	0(0.0%)	1(100.0%)	0(0.0%)	1(100%)
Ghana	0(0.0%)	3(75%)	1(25%)	4(100%)
Guinea B	0(0.0%)	1(16.7%)	5(83.3%)	6(100%)
Kenya	0(0.0%)	2(100.0%)	0(0.0%)	2(100%)
Liberia	0(0.0%)	4(66.7%)	2(33.3%)	6(100%)
Mali	0(0.0%)	2(66.7%)	1(33.3%)	3(100%)
Niger	2(100.0%)	0(0.0%)	0(0.0%)	2(100%)
Nigeria	3(1.8%)	97(60.2%)	61(37.9%)	161(100%)
Senegal	3(60.0%)	2(40.0%)	0(0.0%)	5(100%)
Sierra Leone	0(0.0%)	1(100.0%)	0(0.0%)	1(100%)
The Gambia	0(0.0%)	4(100.0%)	0(0.0%)	4(100%)
Togo	0(0.0%)	1(50.0%)	1(50.0%)	2(100%)
Total	**14(5.6%)**	**153(60.7%)**	**85(33.7%)**	**252(100%)**

Source: Field Survey, 2020

Table 11 shows respondents opinion on how much they trust state security system in their country, the result shows that majority (80%) of the respondents in Benin said they have low trust for the state security system, majority (75%) in Burkina Faso said they have low trust for their state security system, in Burundi (50%) said they have low trust for the state security system while another 50% said they don't trust the state security system at all. Higher percentage (65.2%) in Cameroon have low trust for the state security system, majority (40%) of the respondents in Cote d' Ivoire have low trust for the state security system, majority (100%) in Ethiopia have low trust for their state security system. In Ghana, majority (75%) of the respondents have low trust for the state security system, in Liberia, majority (66.7%) of the respondents have low trust for the state security system, in Mali, majority of the respondents (66.7%) of the respondents have low trust for the state security system.

In Niger, 100% of the respondents have low trust for the state security system. In Nigeria, majority (60.2%) of the respondents have low trust for the state security system. In Senegal, majority (60%) of the respondents have high trust for the state security system. In Sierra Leone, 100% of the respondents have low trust for the state security system. In Gambia, 100% of the

respondents have low trust for the state security system. In Togo, 50% of the respondents have low trust for the state security system while another 50% said they don't trust the state security system at all. This shows that all the countries have low trust for the state security or don't trust them at all, except for Senegal where majority of their respondents have high trust for their state security system. This low trust and lack of trust for the state security system could be as a result of inefficiency of the security agents to curb high level of insecurity and crime in their different countries coupled with harassment, arbitrary arrest of innocent citizens, intimidation, extortion, brutality, extra-judicial killings carried out by these security agents against innocent citizens.

Table 12: Respondents' opinion on whether a society where conflicts are resolved through dialogue would experience sustainable development faster

A society where conflicts are resolved through dialogue would experience sustainable development faster?		
Responses	**Frequency**	**Percentages**
Strongly agree	154	61.1%
Agree	82	32.5%
Neither agree nor disagree	15	6.0%
Disagree	1	0.4%
Total	**252**	**100%**

Source: Field Survey, 2020

Table 12 above presents respondents opinion on whether a society where conflicts are resolved through dialogue would experience sustainable development faster, the result shows that 61.1% of the respondents strongly agree that a society where conflicts are resolved through dialogue would experience sustainable development faster, 32.5% of the respondents agree that a society where conflicts are resolved through dialogue would experience sustainable development faster, 6% of the respondents neither agree nor disagree that a society where conflicts are resolved through dialogue would experience sustainable development faster while 0.4% of the respondents disagree that a society where conflicts are resolved through dialogue would experience sustainable development faster. This implies that majority of the respondents

strongly agreed that a society where conflicts are resolved through dialogue would experience sustainable development faster.

Figure 12: Respondents' opinion on whether religious intolerance is a major threat to peace and security in their country
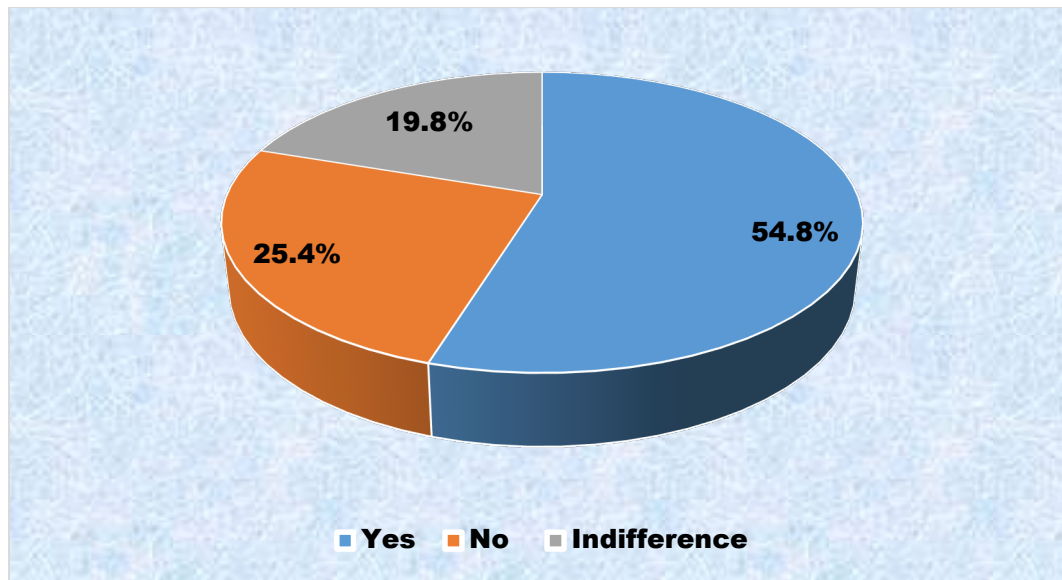
Source: Field Survey, 2020

Figure 12 above shows respondents opinion on whether religious intolerance is a major threat to peace and security in their country, the result shows that 54.8% of the respondents said yes that religious intolerance is a major threat to peace and security in their country, 25.4% of the respondents said no that religious intolerance is not a major threat to peace and security in their country, while 19.8% of the respondents where indifferent on whether religious intolerance is a major threat to peace and security in their country, this implies that majority (54.8%) of the respondents said yes that religious intolerance is a major threat to peace and security in their country.

Figure 13: Respondents opinion on whether ethnic marginalization and grievance account for violent conflict in their country?
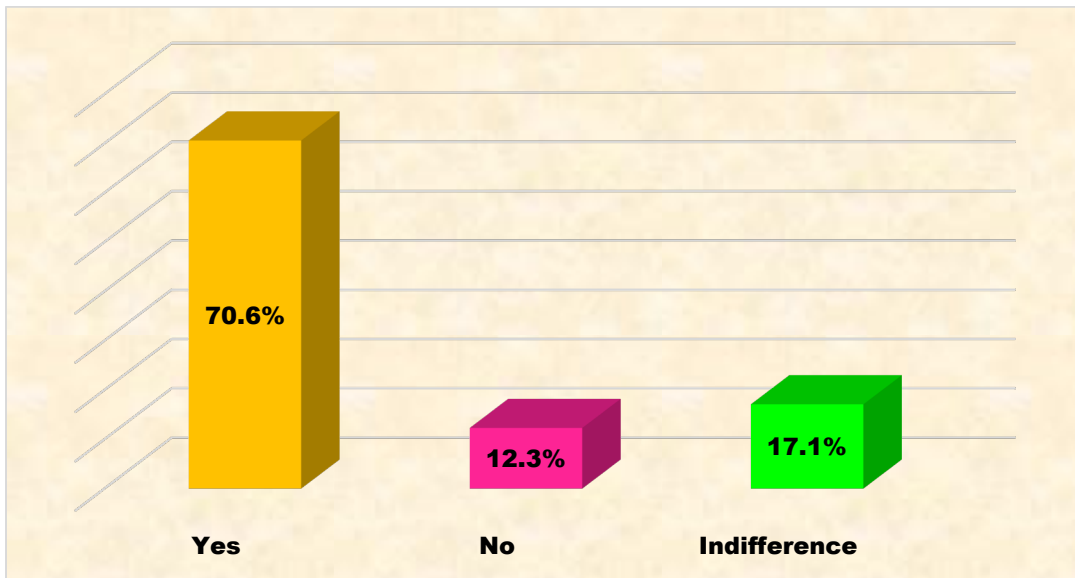
Figure 13 above shows respondents opinion on whether ethnic marginalization and grievance account for violent conflict in their country, the result shows that 70.6% of the respondents said yes that ethnic marginalization and grievance account for violent conflict in their country, 12.3% of the respondents said no that ethnic marginalization and grievance does not account for violent conflict in their country, while 17.1% of the respondents were indifferent on whether ethnic marginalization and grievance account for violent conflict in their country. This implies that ethnic marginalization and grievance account for violent conflicts in West African countries.

Section C: Development.

This section focused on developmental issues within West and Central African countries. Respondents were asked to rate the level of development in their country, factors they think

hinders development in their country, amongst other vital issues. Their responses and opinion are presented below in form of charts and tables.

Table 13: Respondents' rating of developmental level in their state and country

How do you rate the level of development in your state or country?		
Ratings	**Frequency**	**Percentages**
Highly developed	4	1.6%
Adequately developed	21	8.3%
Underdeveloped	227	90.1%
Total	**252**	**100%**

Source: Field Survey, 2020.

Table 13 above presents how respondents rate the level of development in their country, the data shows that 1.6% of the respondents rated their country as highly developed, 8.3% rated their country as adequately developed while 90.1% of the respondents rated their country as underdeveloped. This is implication that majority (90.1%) rated their country as underdeveloped. This could be as a result of infrastructural deficit, bad governance, lack of basic social amenities, lack of health and educational facilities in West and Central African countries.

Figure 13: Respondents' opinion on what they think hinders development in their state and country.
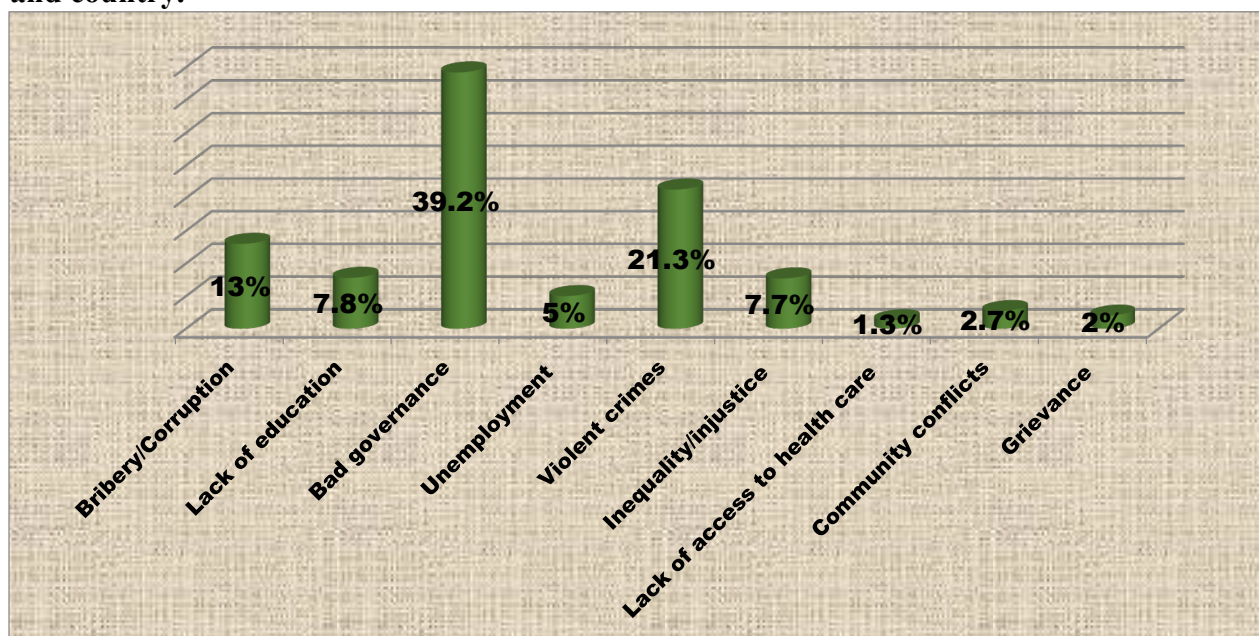
Figure 13 above presents respondents opinion on what they think hinders development in their state and country, the result shows that 13% of the respondents opined that bribery/corruption were the major hindrance to development in their country, 7.8% said that lack of education is the major hindrance to development, 39.2% of the respondents opined that bad governance is the major hindrance to development in their country, 5% of the respondents stated that unemployment is the major hindrance to development in their country, 21.3% of the respondents stated that violent crimes is the major hindrance to development in their country, 7.7% of the respondents stated that inequality/injustice is the major hindrance to development in their country, 1.3% of the respondents were of the opinion that lack of access to health is the major hindrance to development in their country, 2.7% of the respondents stated that community conflict is the major hindrance to development in their country, while 2% of the respondent stated that grievance is the major hindrance to development in their country. This implies that bad governance is one of the major hindrances to development in West and Central African countries.

Table 14: Respondents' opinion on whether corruption and lack of transparency are the greatest issues in development

Are corruption and lack of transparency the greatest issues in development?		
Responses	**Frequency**	**Percentages**
Strongly agree	174	69.0%
Agree	61	24.2%
Neither agree nor disagree	15	6.0%
Disagree	2	0.8%
Total	**252**	**100%**

Table 14 above presents respondents opinion on whether corruption and lack of transparency are the greatest issues in development, the data shows that 69% of the respondents are strongly agreed that corruption and lack of transparency are the greatest issues in development, 24.2% agreed that corruption and lack of transparency are the greatest issues in development, 6% of the respondents neither agreed nor disagreed that corruption and lack of transparency are the

greatest issues in development, while 0.8% of the respondents disagreed that corruption and lack of transparency are the greatest issues in development. This implies that corruption and lack of transparency in governance are the greatest issues in development.
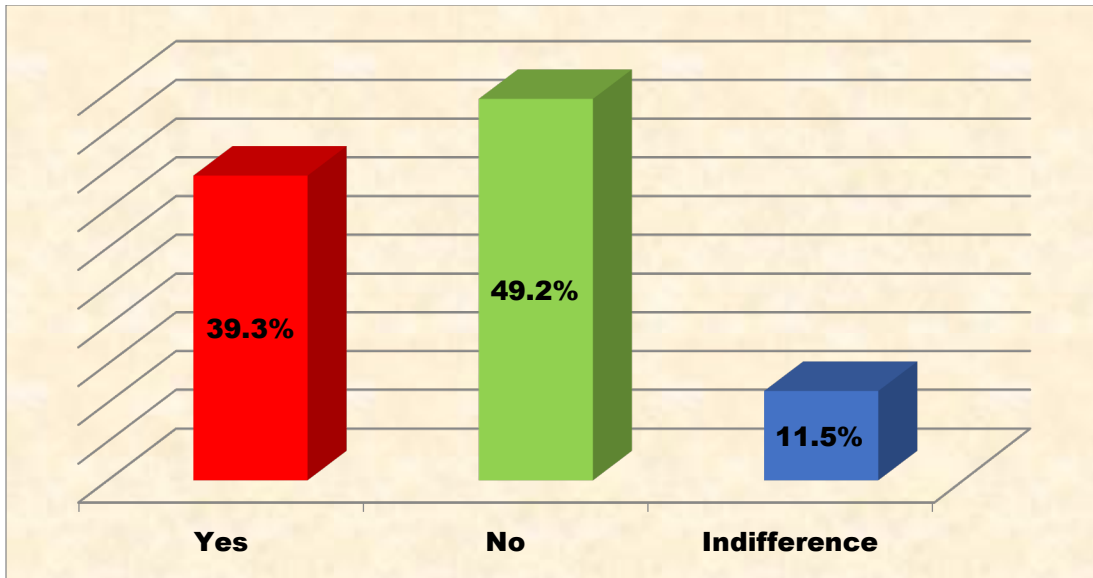
Table 15: Respondents' opinion on whether ethnic marginalization and economic deprivation have retarded development in some part of their country

Ethnic marginalization and economic deprivation have retarded development in some part of your country?		
Ratings	**Frequency**	**Percentages**
Yes	170	97.5%
No	35	13.9%
Indifference	47	18.7%
Total	**252**	**100%**

Source: Field Survey, 2020.

Table 15 presents respondents opinion on whether ethnic marginalization and economic deprivation have retarded development in some part of their country, the result shows that 97.5% of the respondents said yes that ethnic marginalization and economic deprivation have retarded development in some part of their country, 13.9% of the respondents said no that ethnic marginalization and economic deprivation have not retarded development in some part of their country, while 18.7% of the respondents were indifferent to whether ethnic marginalization and economic deprivation have retarded development in some part of their country, this implies that ethnic marginalization and economic deprivation have retarded development in some parts of West and Central Africa.

Figure 14: Respondents opinion on whether poor people around them have access to education in their community and country.

Source: Field Survey, 2020

Figure 14 is a bar chart showing respondents opinion on whether poor people around them have access to education in their community and country, the result shows that 39.3% of the respondents said yes that poor people around them have access to education their community and country, 49.2% of the respondents said no that poor people around them do not have access to education in their community and country, while 11.5% if the respondents were indifferent on whether poor people around them have access to education in their community and country, this shows that poor people in West and Central Africa do not have access to education.

Table 16: Respondent' opinion on how difficult it is for the poor to secure a modest accommodation in their community.

How difficult is it for poor to secure a modest accommodation in your country		
Ratings	Frequency	Percentages
Very easy	7	2.8%
Easy	8	3.1%
Difficult	110	43.7%

Very difficult	127	50.4%
Total	**252**	**100%**

Table 16 presents respondents opinion on how difficult it is for the poor to secure a modest accommodation in their community and country, the result shows that 2.8% of the respondents said it is very easy for poor around them to secure, 3.1% of the respondents said it is very for the poor to secure a modest accommodation in their country, 43.7% said it is difficult for the poor to secure a modest accommodation in their country, 43.7% of the respondents said it is very difficult for poor to secure a modest accommodation in their country, this implies that it is very difficult for the poor to secure a modest accommodation in West and Central Africa.

Figure 15: Respondents opinion on whether Covid-19 affected their your source of livelihood
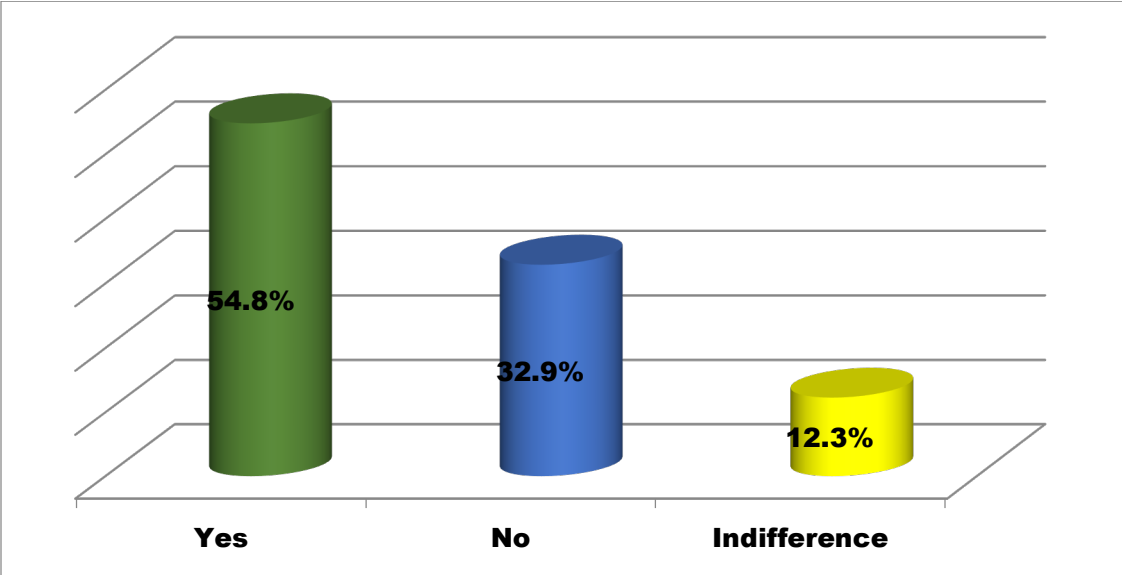
Figure 15 is a bar chart showing respondents opinion on whether Covid-19 affected their source of livelihood, the result shows that 54.8% of the respondents said yes that the Covid-19 affected their means of livelihood, 32.9% of the respondents said no that the Covid-19 did not affect their means of livelihood, while 12.3% of the respondents were indifferent on whether the Covid-19 affected their means of livelihood. This implies that Covid-19 affected the livelihood of a lot of people in West and Central Africa.

Section D: Human Rights

Section D was concerned with issues of human rights, respondents were asked to rate the level of respect for human rights in their country, threats to human rights in their various countries,

law enforcement agents and respect for human rights, amongst other issues, respondents responses and opinion are presented in tables and charts below.

Table 17: Respondents' rating of the level of respect for human rights in their country

How do you rate the level of respect for human rights in your country?		
Ratings	**Frequency**	**Percentages**
Very high	3	1.2%
High	13	5.2%
Medium	57	22.6%
Low	98	38.9%
Very low	81	32.1%
Total	**252**	**100%**

Source: Field Survey, 2020.

Table 17 presents respondents rating of the level of respect for human rights in their countries, the result shows that 1.2% of the respondents rated the level of respect for human rights in their country as very high, 5.2% rated it as high, 22.6% rated as medium, 38.9% rated it as low while 32.1% of the respondents rated the level of respect for human rights in their country as very low, this shows that the level of respect for human rights in West and Central African countries are low.

Figure 16: Respondents opinion on what they consider the greatest threat to human rights in their country
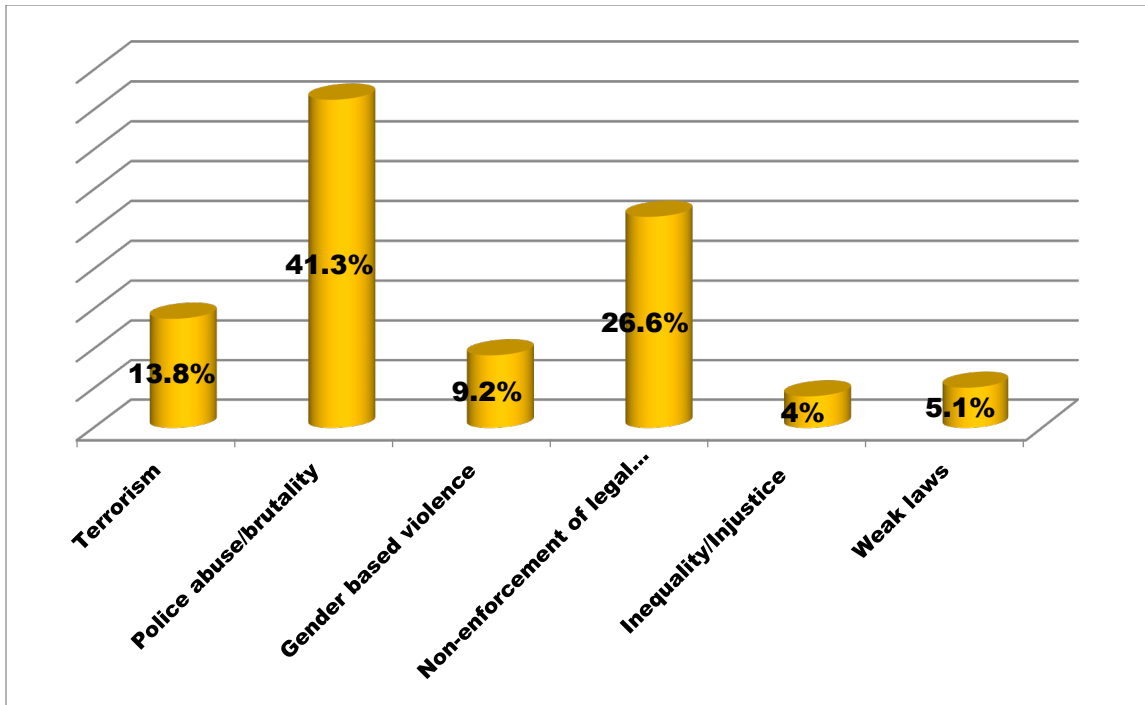
Source: Field Survey, 2020

Figure 16 above presents respondents opinion on whether they consider the greatest threat to human rights in their country, the result shows that 13.8% of the respondents opined that terrorism is the greatest threat to human rights in their country, 41.3% of the respondents opined that police abuse/brutality is the greatest threat to human rights in their country, 9.2% of the respondents were of the opinion that gender based violence is the greatest threat to human rights in their country, 26.6% of the respondents opined that non-enforcement of legal framework is the greatest threat to human rights in their country, 4% of the respondents were of the opinion that inequality/injustice is the greatest threat to human right in their country, while 5.1% of the respondents said that weak laws are the major threat to human rights in their country. This implies that police brutality and abuse is the greatest threat to human rights in West and Central African countries.

Table 18: Respondents' opinions on whether more developed societies with greater respect for human rights have more effective government.

Do more developed societies with greater respect for human rights have more effective government?		
Responses	**Frequency**	**Percentages**

Strongly agree	117	46.4%
Agree	111	44.0%
Neither agree nor disagree	21	8.3%
Disagree	3	1.2%
Total	**252**	**100%**

Source: Field Survey, 2020.

Table 18 presents respondents opinion on whether more developed societies with greater respect for human rights have more effective government, the result shows that 46.4% of the respondents strongly agree to the assertion that developed societies with greater respect for human rights have more effective government, 44% agreed, 8.3% of the respondents neither agreed or disagreed, while 1.2% of the respondents disagreed that more developed societies with greater respect for human rights have more effective government, this further implies that more developed societies with greater respect for human rights have more effective government than their counterparts in West and Central Africa that have very low respect for human rights.

Figure 17: Respondents opinion on how serious the general human right challenge is in their country.
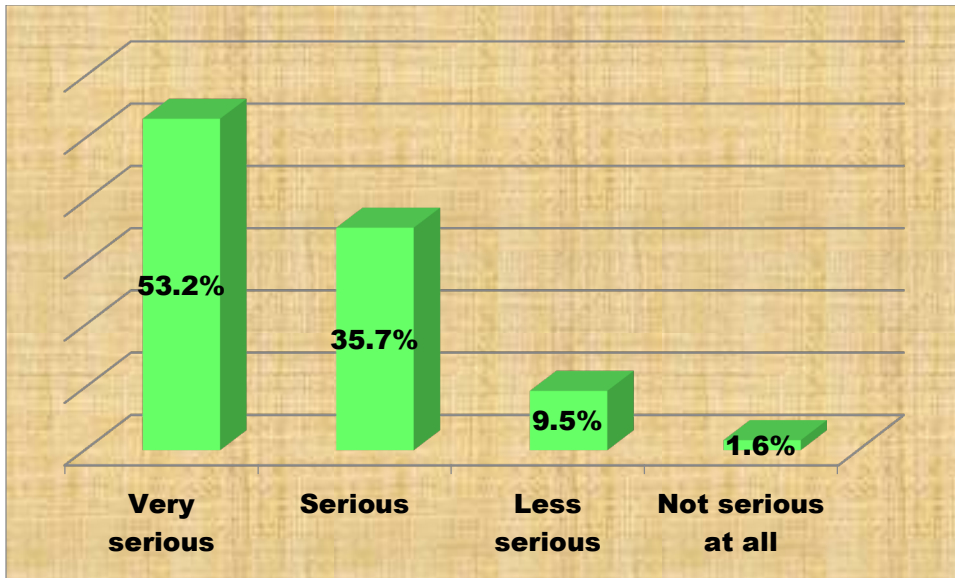
Figure 17 presents respondents opinion on how serious the general human right challenge is in their country, the result shows that 53.2% of the respondents opined that the general human rights challenge is a very serious issues in their country, 35.7% of the respondents said it is serious, 9.5% of the respondents said it is less serious, while 1.6% of the respondents said it is not serious at all, this implies that the general human right challenge in West and Central African countries is a very serious issues, this could be as a result of extra-judicial killings by security agents, brutality and harassment of the populace in West and Central Africa.

Table 18: Respondents' opinion on whether law enforcement agencies in their country do not respect the rights of citizens

Law enforcement agencies do not respect the rights of their citizens.		
Responses	**Frequency**	**Percentages**
Strongly agree	117	46.4%
Agree	90	35.7%
Neither agree nor disagree	34	4.4%
Disagree	11	13.5%
Total	**252**	**100%**

Table 18 above presents respondents opinion on whether law enforcement agencies in their country do not respect the rights of citizens, the result shows that 46.4% of the respondents

strongly agreed that law enforcement agents in their country do not respect the rights of their citizens, 35.7% of the respondents agreed that the law enforcement agencies in their countries do not respect the rights of citizens, 4.4% of the respondents neither agreed nor disagreed on whether law enforcement agencies respect the rights of the citizens, while 13.5% disagreed that law enforcement in their country do not respect their rights of the citizens. This implies that law enforcement agents in West and Central Africa do not respect the rights of the citizens. This could account for high rate of brutality, extortion, intimation, harassment, arbitrary arrest, illegal and elongated detention of innocent citizens by law enforcement agents in West and Central Africa.

Figure 18: Respondents opinion on whether the COVID-19 and the state measures worsen the abuse of human rights in their country/community.
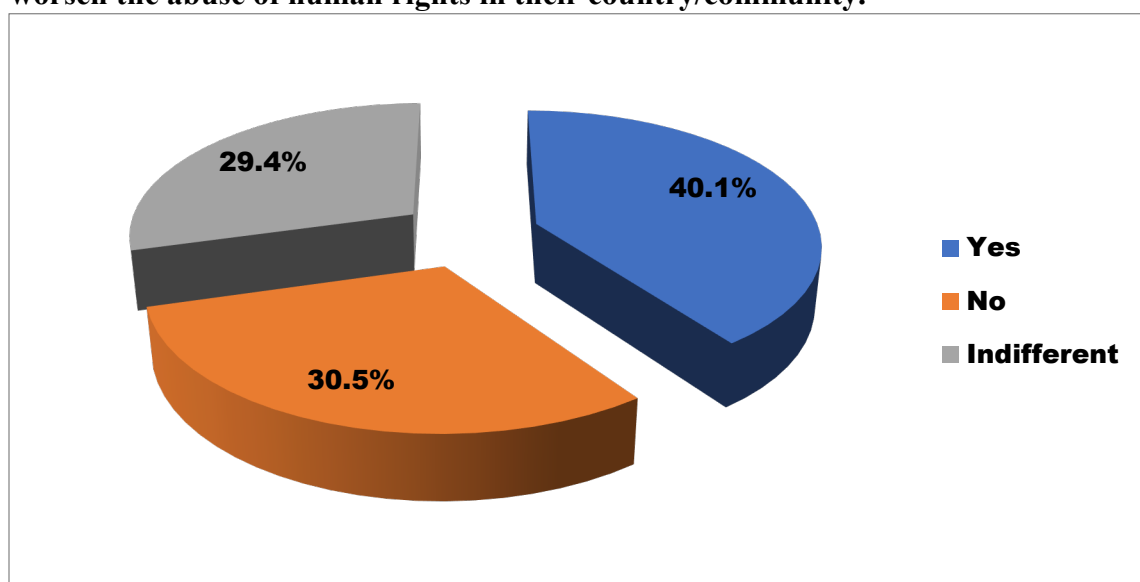
Source: Field Survey, 2020

Figure 18 is a pie chart showing respondents opinion on whether the Covid-19 and the state measures worsen the abuse of human rights in their community/country, the result shows that 40.1% of the respondents said yes, that the Covid-19 and the state measures worsen the abuse of human rights in their community/country, 30.5% of the respondents said no that the Covid-19 and the state measures did not worsen the abuse of human rights in their community/country, while 29.4% of the respondents were indifferent on whether the Covid-19 and the state measure worsen the abuse of human rights in their community/country. This is an indication that the Covid-19 and the state measures worsen the abuse of human rights in their community/country, the finding could be buttressed by the fact that some people lost their

lives not due to Covid-19 pandemic but due to law enforcement brutality, extra-judicial killings during the Covid-19 lockdown.

Section E: Humanitarian Pillars

This section dealt with humanitarian pillars, respondents were asked to rate effectiveness of humanitarianism in their country, whether humanitarian organization in their country have the capacity and flexibility to adjust and adapt and work in synergy with other stakeholders, roles civil societies organization play in humanitarian and development works in respondents country amongst other relevant questions were asked to the respondents and their responses and opinions are presented in tables and charts below.

Table 19: Respondents' rating on the effectiveness of humanitarianism in their country

How do you rate the effectiveness of humanitarianism in their country?		
Ratings	**Frequency**	**Percentages**
Very effective	12	4.8%
Effective	103	40.9%
Ineffective	137	54.4%
Total	**252**	**100%**

Source: Field Survey, 2020.

Table 19 above presents respondents' rating on the effectiveness of humanitarian in their country, the result shows that 4.8% of the respondents rated the effectiveness of humanitarianism in their country as very effective, 40.9% of the respondents rated the humanitarianism in their country as effective, while 54.4% of the respondents opined that the humanitarianism in their country is not effective. This implies that majority (54.4%) of the respondents opined that the humanitarianism as ineffective

Figure 19: Respondents' opinion on what risk is more prevalent in their country.
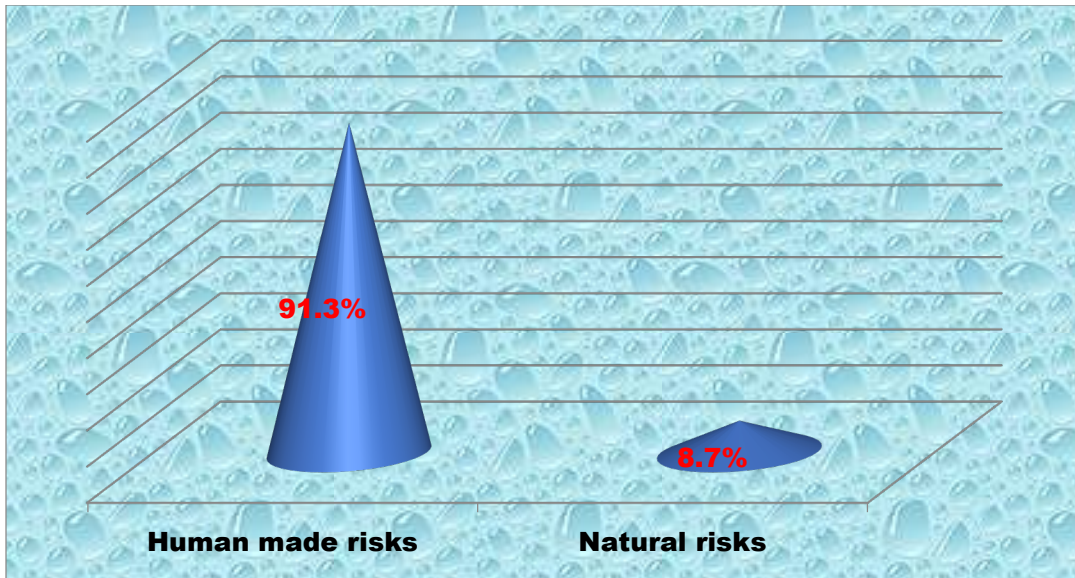
Source: Field Survey, 2020

Figure 19 presents respondents opinion on what risk is more prevalent in their country, the result shows that 91.3% of the respondents were of the opinion that human made risks are more prevalent in their country, while 8.7% of the respondents opined that natural risks are more prevalent in their country. This is indication that human made risks are more prevalent in West and Central Africa. This is because issues of terrorism, armed robbery, violent conflicts, herder-farmers conflict which leads to displacement of some people are all human made risks.

Figure 20: Respondents' opinion on the threats to humanitarian pillars in their community/country.
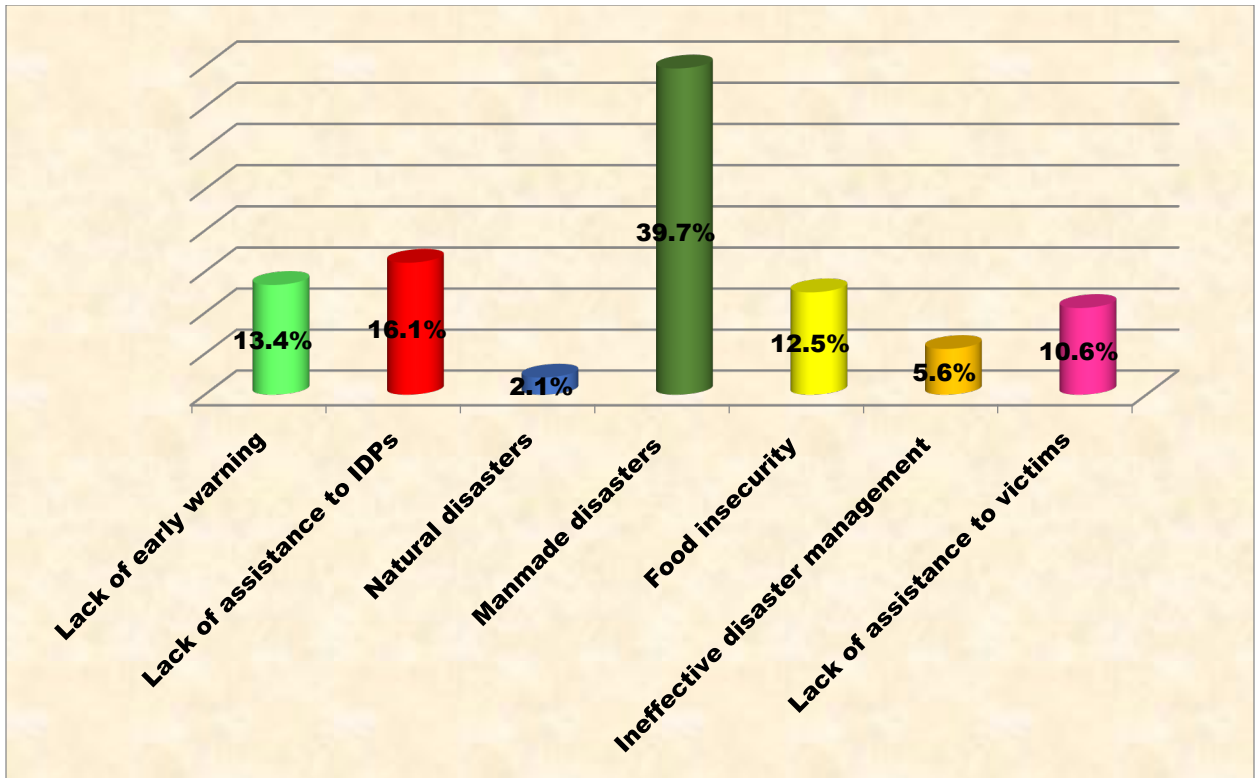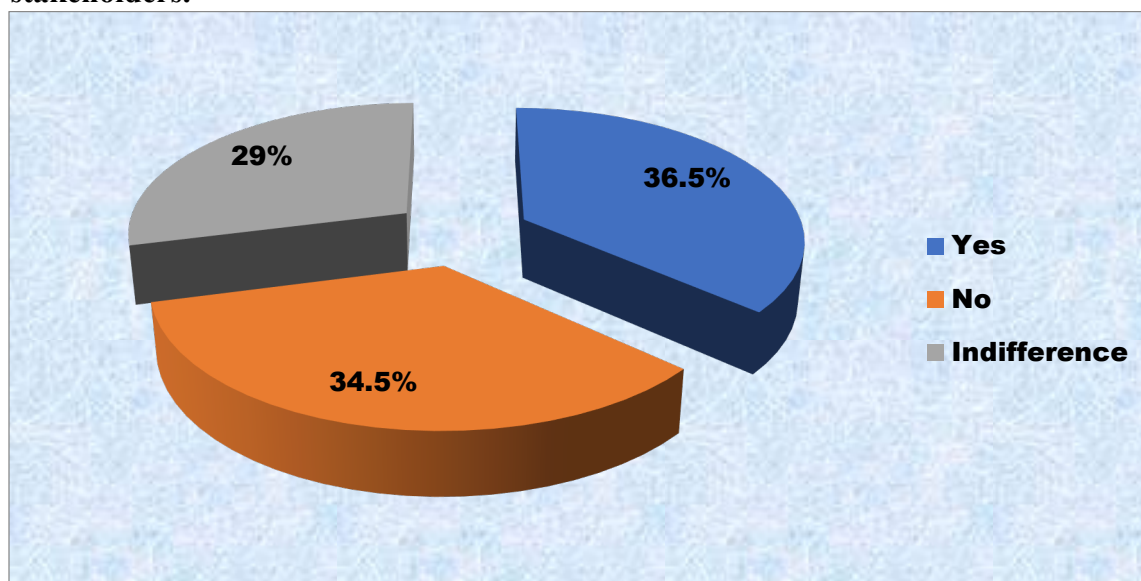
Figure 20 above presents respondents' opinion on the threats to humanitarian pillars in their community/country, their result shows that 13.4% of the respondents opined that lack of early earning is the major threat to humanitarian pillars in their country, 16.1% of the respondents opined that lack of assistance to IDPs is the major threat to humanitarian pillars in their pillars, 2.1% of the respondents opined that natural disasters is the major threat to humanitarian pillars in their country, 39.7% of the respondents opined that manmade disasters are the major threats to humanitarian pillars in their country, 12.5% of the respondents stated that food insecurity is one of the major threats to humanitarian pillars in their country, 5.6% of the respondents were of the opinion that ineffective disaster management is the major threat to humanitarian pillars in their community/country while 10.6% of the respondents stated that lack of assistance to victims are the threats to humanitarian pillars in their community and country. This implies that manmade disasters are the major threat to humanitarian pillars in West and Central Africa. The above finding could be buttressed by the fact that manmade disasters like terrorism, banditry, kidnapping for ransom are threats to humanitarianism, for instance some humanitarian workers were killed in Nigeria by the Boko Haram terrorists in 2019, and this

could deter other humanitarian workers from going to North East Nigeria for humanitarian work.

Figure 21: Respondents' opinion on whether humanitarian organizations in their country have the capacity and flexibility to adjust and adapt and work in synergy with other stakeholders.

Source: Field Survey, 2020.

Figure 21 above presents respondents opinion on whether humanitarian organisations in their country have the capacity and flexibility to adjust and adapt and work in synergy with other stakeholders. The result shows that 36.5% of the respondents said yes that humanitarian organization in their country have the capacity and flexibility to adjust and adapt and work in synergy with other stakeholder, 34.5% of the respondents said no that humanitarian organisations in their country have the capacity and flexibility to adjust and adapt and work in synergy with other stakeholders, while 29% of the respondents were indifference on whether humanitarian organisations in their country have the capacity and flexibility to adjust and adapt and work in synergy with other stakeholder.

Table 20: Respondents' opinion on the assertion that "humanitarian aids and support do not get to the people who need it in their country"

Humanitarian aids and support do not get to the people who need it in your country.		
Response	Frequency	Percentages
Strongly agree	89	35.3%
Agree	104	41.2%
Neither agree nor disagree	47	18.7%

Disagree	12	4.8%
Total	**252**	**100%**

Source; Field Survey

Table 20 above presents respondents opinion on whether humanitarian aids and support do not get to the people who needs it in their country, the result shows that 35.3% of the respondents strongly agreed that humanitarian aids and support do not get to the people who need it in their country, 41.2% of the respondents agreed that humanitarian aids and support do not get to the people who need it in their country, 18.7% of the respondents neither agree nor disagreed that humanitarian aids and support do not get to the people who it in their country, while 4.8% of the respondents disagreed that humanitarian aids and support do not get to the people who need it in their country, this is an indication that humanitarian aids and support do not get to the people who need it in West and Central Africa.

Table 21: Respondents' opinion on the claim that "lack of good governance negatively affects humanitarian services in their country"

Lack of good governance negatively affects humanitarian services in your country?		
Opinion	**Frequency**	**Percentages**
Strongly agree	163	64.7%
Agree	72	28.6%
Neither agree nor disagree	17	6.7%
Total	**252**	**100%**

Source; Field Survey

Table 21 above presents respondents opinion on the claim that "lack of good governance negatively affects humanitarian services in their country, the result shows that 64.7% of the respondents strongly agreed that lack of good governance negatively affects humanitarian services in their country, 28.6% of the respondents agreed that lack of good governance negatively affects humanitarian services in their country, 6.7% of the respondents opined neither agreed nor disagreed that lack of good governance negatively affects humanitarian services in their country. This shows that lack of good governance negatively affects humanitarian services in West and Central Africa.

Table 22: Respondents' opinion on "targeting youth and women are critical in humanitarian services"

Targeting youth and women are critical in humanitarian services?

Opinion	Frequency	Percentages
Strongly agree	139	55.1%
Agree	96	38.1%
Neither agree nor disagree	14	5.6%
Disagree	3	1.2%
Total	**252**	**100%**

Source; Field Survey

Table 22 presents respondents opinion on whether targeting youth and women are critical in humanitarian service, the result shows that 55.1% of the respondents strongly agreed that targeting youths and women are critical in humanitarian services, 38.1% of the respondents agreed, 5.6% of the respondents neither agreed nor disagreed, while 1.2% of the respondents disagreed that targeting youth and women are critical in humanitarian services. This implies that targeting youth and women are critical in humanitarian services.

Table 22: Respondents' opinion on whether "lack of neutrality" negatively affects humanitarian services

Lack of neutrality negatively affects humanitarian services.		
Opinion	**Frequency**	**Percentages**
Strongly agree	144	57.1%
Agree	81	32.1%
Neither agree nor disagree	22	8.7%
Disagree	4	1.6%
Strongly disagree	1	0.4%
Total	**252**	**100%**

Source; Field Survey

Table 22 presents respondents opinion on whether lack of neutrality negatively affects humanitarian services, the result shows that 57.1% of the respondents strongly agreed that lack

of neutrality negatively affects humanitarian services, 32.1% of the respondents agreed that lack of neutrality negatively affects humanitarian services, 8.7% of the respondents neither agreed or disagreed that lack of neutrality negatively affects humanitarian services, 1.6% of the respondents disagreed that lack of neutrality negatively affects humanitarian services, while 0.4% of the respondents strongly disagreed that lack of neutrality negatively affects humanitarian services. This is an indication that lack of neutrality negatively affects humanitarian services.

Section F: Interlink between the four pillars.

This section dealt with interlink of the four pillars. Respondents' opinion and responses are presented in tables and charts below.

Table 22: Respondents' opinion on whether there is interlink among peace and security, development, human rights and humanitarian

There is interlink among peace and security, development, human rights and humanitarian.		
Responses	**Frequency**	**Percentages**
Strongly agree	172	68.3%
Agree	73	29%
Neither agree nor disagree	7	3.8%
Total	**252**	**100%**

Source: Field Survey, 2020

Table 22 above presents respondents response on whether there is interlink among peace and security, development, human rights and humanitarian, the result shows that 68.3% of the

respondents strongly agreed that there is interlink between peace and security, development, human rights and humanitarian, 29% of the respondents agreed that there is interlink among peace and security, development rights and humanitarian, 3.8% of the respondents neither agreed nor disagreed that there is interlink among peace and security, development, human rights and humanitarian. This shows that there is interlink between peace and security, development, human rights and humanitarian.

Table 23: Respondents' opinion on whether humanitarian and development actors work together in their community/country.

Do humanitarian and development actors work together in your community/country?		
Ratings	**Frequency**	**Percentages**
Yes	109	43.2%
No	69	27.4%
Indifference	74	29.4%
Total	**252**	**100%**

Source: Field Survey, 2020.

Table 23 presents respondents opinion on whether humanitarian and development actors work together in their community/country, the result shows that 43.2% of the respondents said yes, that humanitarian and development actors work together in their community/country, 27.4% of the respondents said no that humanitarian and development actors do not work together in their community/country, while 29.4% of the respondents were indifferent to the assertion that humanitarian and development actors work together in your community/country. This is an indication that humanitarian and development actors work together in West and Central Africa.

Table 24: Respondents' opinion on whether lack of peace and security hinders development

Lack of peace and security hinders development?

Responses	Frequency	Percentages
Strongly agree	204	81%
Agree	47	18.6%
Disagree	1	0.4%
Total	**252**	**100%**

Source: Field Survey, 2020.

Table 24 above presents respondents opinion on whether lack of peace and security hinders development, the result shows that 81% of the respondents strongly agreed that lack of peace and security hinders development, 18.6% of the respondents agreed that lack of peace and security hinders development, 0.4% of the respondents disagreed that lack of peace and security hinders development. This is an indication that lack of peace and security hinders development in West and Central Africa.

Table 25: Respondents' opinion on whether underdevelopment is the cause and effect of human rights abuse in their country

Underdevelopment is the cause and effect of human rights abuse in your country.		
Responses	**Frequency**	**Percentages**
Strongly agree	93	36.9%
Agree	94	37.3%
Neither agree nor disagree	44	17.5%
Disagree	18	7.1%
Strongly disagree	3	1.2%
Total	**252**	**100%**

Source: Field Survey, 2020.

Table 25 presents respondents opinion on whether underdevelopment is the cause and effect of human rights abuse in their country, the result shows that 36.9% of the respondents strongly agreed that underdevelopment is the cause and effect of human rights abuse in West and Central Africa, 37.3% agreed to the above assertion, 17.5% of neither agreed nor disagreed to the above assertion, 7.1% of the respondents disagreed to the above assertion, while 1.2% of the respondents strongly disagreed that underdevelopment is the cause and effect of human

right abuse in West and Central Africa. This is an indication that underdevelopment is the cause and effect of human rights abuse in West and Central Africa.

Table 26: Respondents' opinion on whether human rights violation is the major cause of conflict in their country

Human rights violation is the major cause of conflict in your country?		
Ratings	Frequency	Percentages
Yes	156	61.9%
No	54	21.4%
Indifference	42	16.7%
Total	**252**	**100%**

Source: Field Survey, 2020.

Table 26 above presents respondents opinion on whether human rights violation is the major cause of conflict in West and Central Africa, the result shows that 61.9% of the respondents said yes that human rights violation is the major cause of conflict in West and Central Africa, 21.4% of the respondents said no, that human rights violations is not the major cause of conflict in West and Central Africa, 16.7% of the respondents were indifference to the assertion that human rights violation is the major cause of conflict in West and Central Africa. This is an indication that human rights violation is the major cause of conflict in West and Central Africa.

Table 27: Respondents' opinion on whether there have been opportunities in the application of the inter-linkages approach for conflict prevention and resolution

Have there been opportunities in the application of the inter-linkages approach for conflict prevention and resolution?		
Ratings	Frequency	Percentages
Yes	36	14.3%
No	69	27.4%

Indifference	147	58.3%
Total	**252**	**100%**

Source: Field Survey, 2020.

Table 27 presents respondents opinion on whether there have been opportunities in the application of the inter-linkages approach for conflict prevention and resolution, the result shows that 14.3% of the respondents said yes, that there have been opportunities in the application of the inter-linkages approaches for conflict prevention and resolution, 27.4% of the respondents said no that there have been no opportunities in the application of the inter-linkages approaches for conflict prevention and resolution, while 58.3% of the respondents were indifference to the assertion that there have been opportunities in the application of the inter-linkages approach for conflict prevention and resolution.

Table 28: Respondents' opinion on whether there have been challenges in the application of the inter-linkages approach for conflict prevention and resolution

Have there been challenges in the application of the inter-linkages approach for conflict prevention and resolution?		
Ratings	**Frequency**	**Percentages**
Yes	49	19.4%
No	47	18.7%
Indifference	156	61.9%
Total	**252**	**100%**

Source: Field Survey, 2020.

Table 28 presents respondents opinion on whether there have been challenges in the application of the inter-linkages approach for conflict prevention and resolution, the result shows that 19.4% of the respondents said yes, that there have been challenges in the application of the inter-linkages approach for conflict prevention and resolution, 18.7% of the respondents said no that there have been no challenges in the application of the inter-linkages approaches for conflict prevention and resolution, 61.9% of the respondents were indifferent to the assertion that there been challenges in the application of the inter-linkages approach for the conflict prevention and resolution. This shows that there have been challenges in the application of the inter-linkages approach for conflict prevention and resolution in West and Central Africa.