



EU-ECOWAS PSS PROJECT

PROJECT COMMUNICATION AND VISIBILITY STRATEGY AND ACTION PLAN

Project Title and Number	<u>EUROPEAN UNION SUPPORT TO ECOWAS REGIONAL PEACE, SECURITY AND STABILITY MANDATE (EU-ECOWAS PSS) (FED decision Number 022-795 – 10th EDF Regional Indicative Programme)</u>
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Consultant	Paul EJIME

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Abbreviations

AU	African Union
CSOs	Civil Society Organisations
DPA	Directorate of Political Affairs
DPKRS	Directorate of Peace Keeping and Regional Security
EMB	Election Management Bodies
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
ECPF	ECOWAS Conflict Prevention Framework
ECWARN	ECOWAS Early Warning System
EDF	European Union Development Fund
EPF	ECOWAS Peace Fund
ESF	ECOWAS Standby Force
EU	European Union
EWD	Early Warning Directorate
GESF	ECOWAS Gender and Election Strategic Framework
MFD	Mediation and Facilitation Directorate
MSC	Mediation and Security Council
MPMC	Mission Planning and Management Cell
NEC	National Election Commissions
NCSM	Network of Civil Society Movements
NNHRI	Network of National Human Rights Institutions
PAPS	Directorate of Political Affairs, Peace and Security
PSO	Peace Support Operation
PSOD	Peace Support Operation Division
SALW	Small Arms and Light Weapons
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
WACSOF	West African Civil Society Forum
WANEP	West Africa Network for Peace-building

0. Executive Summary

Violent conflicts and emerging security threats constitute the greatest obstacle to the effective reduction of poverty and economic development in West Africa. While peace and security is primarily the responsibility of Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) Member States, the organisation seeks to collaboratively build a sustainable peace with human security for all in the region, using various regional and international instruments.

One of the major collaborative initiatives is the European Union support to ECOWAS Regional Peace, Security and Stability Mandate (**EU-ECOWAS PSS Project**). This partnership project **Financing Agreement ROC/FED/022-795** under the 10th European Development Fund (EDF) was signed in 2013 for “Strengthening Peace, Security and Stability in West Africa (ECOWAS Grant).”

The rationale for the development of the Communication and Visibility Strategy for the PSS Project is articulated with clearly stated objective to establish the necessary mechanism to raise awareness of relevant stakeholders and audiences on the need for the implementation of the PSS Project, the EU support to the project, the expected results/benefits and the impact of the project for the ECOWAS region.

The specific objectives aim to ensure that the communication and visibility mechanism builds a positive corporate identity for the project using appropriate communication tools/materials that project a good public image; sensitise stakeholders on the need for strong commitment to, ownership, collaboration, and coordination for the effective implementation of the Project; provide sustained visibility for the project activities and impact and on the EU-ECOWAS partnership in promoting peace and security in the ECOWAS region.

Under the specific objectives, there will also be advocacy campaigns to boost policy, political commitment and support for the project at the regional and national level to strengthen local ownership and sustainability of on-going projects and attracting support for future projects; and strengthening the capacity of ECOWAS institutions (especially the Department of Political Affairs, Peace and Security (PAPS) and the ECOWAS Peace Fund (EPF), and the implementation of thematic aspects of ECPF to enable ECOWAS to deliver on its peace and security mandate.

Effective implementation of the strategy and action plan will ensure that the overall and specific objectives of the PSS Project are achieved. These are to contribute to building and maintaining Peace, Security and Stability in West Africa to ensure a conducive environment for development.

The specific objective of the project is to provide support to ECOWAS that will enable it to execute its conflict prevention and resolution mandate in a sustainable way, notably by executing a shift from a reactive to a preventive and resilient mode in acquiring increased strategic, operational and management capabilities. The intervention logic consists of a twin-track approach, notably:

- Strengthening the institutional and managerial capacity of the Departments and other institutions with responsibility for this sector i.e. the Department of Political Affairs, Peace and Security and the ECOWAS Peace Fund.
- Supporting the development and implementation of Plans of Action of selected components of the ECOWAS Conflict Prevention Framework (ECPF)

This Project Communication and Visibility Strategy has been developed within the framework of the EU Communication and Visibility Guidelines 2010, and an interface with the Communication Directorate of the ECOWAS Commission. A rapid assessment and desk review were undertaken coupled with the administration of a quantitative questionnaire and interview of relevant stakeholders. This was to gather relevant information and inputs on best practices and preferred communication channels, language, tools and channels for communication, influencers and sensitisation agents. This also enabled a review of existing communication strategies, policies and ECOWAS interventions in the peace and security sector for best practices to enrich the process.

This methodology did not only reveal critical communication and visibility gaps/challenges, which if unresolved could impede the successful implementation of the PSS Project. It also provided an informed basis for the strategic conclusions contained in this strategy document and Action Plan.

The identified challenges/gaps relate to policy and governance, such as the lack of an institutional communication and visibility strategy or guideline for ECOWAS; programmatic issues such as the lack of effective coordination mechanism or information sharing among ECOWAS entities, and lack clearly defined branding policy and quality control in publications and public presentation of ECOWAS. The other challenges are the haphazard media engagement and access to information by the media and the public, as well as lack of awareness and visibility of partnership programmes/projects.

The strategy further identifies the **Target Groups, Key component of Communication and Visibility Messages** as well as the **Communication and Visibility Tools, and Actions/Activities**. It also proposes a detailed **Implementation Action Plan, Budget** and a **Logical Frame** to guide the implementation.

Lastly, the strategy made a set of key **Recommendations** to ensure a seamless implementation of both the Communication and Visibility Strategy/Action Plan and the PSS Project. The recommendations include the need for a Communication and Visibility Cell/Unit for PAPS and EPF to ensure effective implementation of the activities outlined in the strategy and Action Plan and provide critical visibility to the entities with stake in the realisation of the ECOWAS peace and security mandate. The document also recommended the role of a Peace and Security Ambassador to advocate to the political leadership in ECOWAS member States and raise regional awareness about the PSS Project.

Introduction

The Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) draws its mandate and legitimacy in “Peace and Security” from diverse but related regional and international legal documents including those of the organization itself, the African Union (AU) and the United Nations (UN). These preclude the **1993 ECOWAS revised Treaty**, the “**Declaration of ECOWAS Political Principles**” (A/DCL.1/7/91) and the 1999 “Protocol Relating to the Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management, Resolution, Peace-Keeping and Security. Also, recognizing the need to address long-term structural conflict issues, ECOWAS adopted in 2008 a “**Conflict Prevention Framework (ECPF)**”, which concentrates on the root causes of conflicts.

ECOWAS’ role in this domain is mainly to develop regional norms and standards with regards to key conflict-inducing issues as well as political and security governance. It is also required to facilitate resource mobilization for peace and security activities and monitor compliance of regional agreements within the Member States.

To deliver on this complex peace and security mandate, ECOWAS and the European Union (EU) in 2013 entered into a three-year **Financing Agreement ROC/FED/022-795** under the 10th European Development Fund (EDF) for “Strengthening Peace, Security and Stability in West Africa (ECOWAS Grant),” which gave rise to the European Union-support to ECOWAS Regional Peace, Security and Stability Mandate (**EU-ECOWAS PSS Project**).

The Project Communication and Visibility strategy is developed in line with the provisions of Financing and Grant Agreement, which makes Communication and Visibility Strategy one of the key elements of the Project’s implementation. The main objective is to establish the necessary mechanism to raise awareness and visibility on the Project, its activities, expected results and the benefits of EU-ECOWAS partnership in the sector.

The need to ensure that the project implementation is on an even keel necessitated a rapid assessment and desk review coupled with the administration of a quantitative questionnaire on the relevant stakeholders to determine what working and what is not at the level of institutional communication and visibility of the project partners. This was to gather relevant information and inputs on best practices and preferred communication channels, language, tools and channels for communication, the targets and sensitisation agents.

This approach also enabled the review of existing communication strategies, policies and ECOWAS interventions in the peace and security sector for best practices to enrich the process.

The goal is to establish a rationale and provide an informed basis for strategy document that adequately provides concrete solutions to identifiable communication and visibility gaps/challenges so as to ensure effective implementation of the Project goals and objectives.

1. Background Information

The capacity of ECOWAS to effectively address the challenges of instability and develop a proactive approach to conflict prevention remains limited despite a strong regional political will. This problem is linked to tensions between national and supranational institutions, capacity challenges within the ECOWAS Commission related to internal coordination; organisational and implementation capacity of the Department of Political Affairs, Peace and Security (PAPS) and the ECOWAS Peace Fund (EPF); distribution of roles and responsibilities between ECOWAS and its Member States and Civil Society Organisations; and the ineffective strategic approach of the preventive aspects of the “*Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Resolution, Peace-Keeping and Security.*”

The “**European Union Support to ECOWAS Regional Peace, Security and Stability Mandate**” (EU-ECOWAS PSS Project) (FED decision number 022-795), which falls under the 22nd focal sector of the 10th EDF Regional Indicative Programme, is a major project that provides robust support to ECOWAS in its role as a principal institution addressing the challenges of peace, security and stability in the region.

The overall objective of the EU-ECOWAS PSS Project is to contribute to building and maintaining Peace, Security and Stability in West Africa to ensure a conducive environment for development.

The specific objective is to provide support to ECOWAS that will enable it to execute its conflict prevention and resolution mandate in a sustainable way, notably by executing a shift from a reactive to a preventive and resilient mode in acquiring increased strategic, operational and management capabilities. The intervention logic consists of a twin-track approach, notably:

- Strengthening the institutional and managerial capacity of the Departments and other institutions with responsibility for this sector i.e. the Department of Political Affairs, Peace and Security and the ECOWAS Peace Fund.
- Supporting the development and implementation of Plans of Action of selected components of the ECOWAS Conflict Prevention Framework (ECPF)

1.1. Department of Political Affairs, Peace and Security (PAPS)

One of the key institutional stakeholders of the PSS Project is the ECOWAS Department of Political Affairs, Peace and Security (PAPS) made up of five structures as shown in **Table 1**.

Table1.

No	Directorate	Divisions
1	Directorate of Political Affairs (DPA)	Political Affairs and International Cooperation Division; Democracy and Good Governance Division; Electoral Assistance Division;
2	Directorate of Peacekeeping and Regional Security (DKPRS)	Regional Security; ECOWAS Standby Force; Civilian Planning for PSOs; Small Arms and Light Weapons; Mission Planning and Management Cell
3	Directorate of Early Warning (EWD)	Systems; Analysis; Programme Management Cell
4	Directorate of Mediation and Facilitation (MFD)	Panel of the Wise; Shuttle Diplomacy and Mediation
5	The Peace Fund (EPF)	Project Coordination With an embedded Project Support Unit for PSS

The PAPS Department derives its mandate from the ECOWAS Revised Treaty (1993); the Protocol relating to the Mechanism for Conflict Prevention Management Resolution Peacekeeping and Security (1999); the Supplementary Protocol on Democracy and Good Governance (2001); the Convention on Small Arms and Light Weapons, the ECOWAS Conflict Prevention Framework (2008), and other related legal instruments. Its objectives are: Popularisation, implementation and monitoring of the Mechanism; the Supplementary Protocol on Democracy and Good Governance (2001); and the ECOWAS Conflict Prevention Framework (2008); coordination and servicing of the work of the Mediation and Security Council (MSC) at the Ambassadorial, Ministerial and Heads of State levels, and high-level political meetings with external partners, such as the African Union (AU), other Regional Economic Communities (RECs), the United Nations (UN), and the European Union; electoral assistance to Member States through capacity building for Electoral Management Bodies (EMB), observation and monitoring of elections; and the promotion and consolidation of good governance, peace and security through capacity building for State and quasi-governmental, as well as civil society/non-governmental institutions. The Department also coordinates the activities of the ECOWAS Peace Fund (EPF).

1.1.1.1. The Directorate of Political Affairs (DPA):

This arm of PAPS assists in facilitating the implementation of the protocol relating to the Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management Resolution, Peacekeeping and Security (1999), as well as the Supplementary Protocol on Democracy and Good Governance, including the ECOWAS Conflict Prevention Framework (ECPF). It also facilitates electoral assistance to Member States through capacity building for Electoral Management Bodies (EMB), observation and monitoring of elections. Additionally, it promotes and consolidates good governance through capacity building for political parties, legislative bodies, the Judiciary and the media, as well as human rights and anti-corruption institutions.

1.1.2. Early Warning Directorate (EWD)

Article 58 (f) of the Revised ECOWAS Treaty (1993) provides for the establishment of a regional peace and security observation system and peacekeeping forces where appropriate

The vision of the Early Warning Directorate is to have a fully integrated and functional early warning system, providing the ECOWAS Commission and Member States with timely reports and analysis to enable effective responses in preventing and mitigating violent conflicts in the ECOWAS region. The Directorate has three major divisions: Systems, Analysis, and Communication.

1.1.3. Directorate of Peace Keeping and Regional Security (DPKRS):

Key priority areas of this Department are the development of the full operational capacity of the ECOWAS Standby Force (ESF), Development and Review of relevant ECOWAS Peace Support Operations (PSO) documents such as the ESF Doctrine, Logistics Concept, Conduct and Discipline Policy Framework, Civilian Human Resources Policy Framework and the ESF Operational Framework amongst others.

The Department is also involved in the Management Logistics of ECOWAS Missions; Integration of Police and Civilian Components; Transformation of Mission Planning and Management Cell (MPMC) into Peace Support Operations Division (PSOD); as well as Training and Exercises: conduct of key training courses for ESF elements in Member States

It also strengthens cooperation among Security Forces in fighting organized crime, including terrorism and fighting against the proliferation of Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW) in the ECOWAS region.

1.1.4. Mediation and Facilitation Directorate (MFD):

MFD's main objectives are:

To provide operational Support: backstopping of mediation and preventive diplomacy activities embarked upon by ECOWAS-designated mediators and facilitators, the Council of the Wise and Special Representatives, carry out research and conflict analysis for the mediator prior to, and during, deployment; provides logistics support; and support in designing of mediation strategy;

To manage knowledge and information, disseminate best practices and lessons-learned; To implement capacity-building programmes such as training, workshops/seminars in conflict resolutions, mediation and preventive diplomacy, targeting staff of relevant institutions in the community, appropriate state institutions, Civil Society institutions and local peace constituencies within Member States.

1.1.5. The ECOWAS Peace Fund (EPF):

The ECOWAS Peace Fund (EPF) is a contributive instrument to the achievement of ECOWAS' mandate, with the mission to fund and support relevant activities and initiatives for conflicts prevention, management, resolution, peacekeeping, peace-building and recovery, while developing the capacities of relevant stakeholders to promote durable peace and human security across the West Africa region.

As mentioned earlier, Result 2 of the PSS Project’s twin-track approach is supporting the development and implementation of Plans of Action of selected components of the ECOWAS Conflict Prevention Framework (ECPF).

1.2. The ECOWAS Conflict Prevention Framework (ECPF):

The overall aim of the ECPF is to strengthen the human security architecture in West Africa. The intermediate purpose is to create space within the ECOWAS system and in Member States for cooperative interaction within the region and with external partners to push conflict prevention and peace-building up the political agenda of Member States in a manner that will trigger timely and targeted multi-actor and multi-dimensional action to defuse or eliminate potential and real threats to human security in a predictable and institutional manner.

Table 2: ECPF

ECPF Component	Area of Intervention	Benchmark
1	Early Warning	Increased preventive and response capacity to conflicts in the region and national early warning mechanisms established in selected countries
2	Preventive Diplomacy	Mediation and dialogue facilitation capacity of ECOWAS in preventing and responding to conflicts in the region are strengthened from the regional and national level.
3	Democracy and Political	LTEOMs are deployed to support peaceful elections, and the National Electoral Commissions (NEC) are strengthened to set standards around election
4	Human Rights and Rule of Law	The network of National Human Rights institutions (NHRI) are strengthened as human rights reporting is improved across the MS.
5	Security Governance	Coordination of maritime security structures strengthened
6	Practical Disarmament	Small Arms and Light Weapons are effectively managed in West Africa and stockpiles of weapons are destroyed properly
7	Women, peace and security	Increased leadership and engagement of women in national and regional institutions and mechanisms for prevention, management, and resolution of conflict in West Africa
8	ECOWAS Standby Force	The police and civilian component of the ESF are active and contributing to integrated mission management of Peace Support Operations
9	Humanitarian Assistance	The ECOWAS Crisis Prevention, Management and Humanitarian assistance response is strengthened
10	Enabling Mechanism	To facilitate the effective Implementation of ECPF by ECOWAS Commission with Member States and CSOs.

2. Objective of PSS Project Communication & Visibility Strategy

2.1. Rationale for the PSS Project Communication and Visibility Strategy

The global focus on peace and security reflects a new thinking on the nexus between security and development. Indeed, the goals related to the achievement of peace, security, development and the rule of law in a complex space like the ECOWAS region are not only interdependent, but mutually reinforcing, since there can be no development without peace and security, and neither can there be sustained peace without development.

In this context, an effective Communication and Visibility Strategy for the EU-ECOWAS PSS Project will necessarily require critical interface and coordination with the Directorate of Communication of the ECOWAS Commission, which is domiciled in the Office of the President of the Commission, with the responsibility for planning, coordinating and supervising all activities relating to information dissemination, communication and documentation.

While there have been several attempts at developing Information/Communication Policies for ECOWAS, the organisation still does not have an institutional Communication and Visibility Strategy. The Communication Directorate is in the process of developing what it refers to as a “Graphic Chart,” which is expected to come on stream in the first quarter of 2017. Like many other key ECOWAS departments and directorates, the Communication directorate faces the critical challenge of capacity deficiency for the effective and efficient discharge of its statutory responsibilities resulting in communication gaps.

In line with the Communication and Visibility guidelines for European Union External Actions 2010, the ECOWAS in-house communication and visibility direction and the standard best practices, the **Overall Objective** of Communication and Visibility strategy for the EU-ECOWAS PSS Project is to establish the necessary mechanism to build and raise awareness of relevant stakeholders and audiences on the rationale and need for the implementation of the project, the EU support to the project, the expected results/benefits and the impact of the project for the ECOWAS region.

2.2. Specific objectives

The specific objectives of strategy are to leverage the established mechanism to:

- a. Create a positive corporate identity for the project using appropriate communication tools/materials that project a good public image
- b. Sensitise stakeholders on the need for strong commitment to, ownership, collaboration, and coordination for the effective implementation of the Project
- c. Create awareness and provide sustained visibility for the project activities and impact, and on the EU-ECOWAS partnership in promoting peace and security in the ECOWAS region
- d. Advocacy to boost policy, political commitment and support for the project at the regional and national level to strengthen local ownership and sustainability of on-going projects and attracting support for future projects
- e. Advocacy to strengthen the capacity of ECOWAS institutions (especially PAPS and EPF), and the implementation of thematic aspects of ECPF to enable ECOWAS to deliver on its peace and security mandate.

3. Developing Communication & Visibility Strategy for PSS Project

In view of the limited time available for an intense engagement with the processes, structures and systems of communication within ECOWAS, a rapid assessment of existing communication structure, to find out what is working and not was conducted to provide content and basis for this strategy.

The assessment included interview with key stakeholders to gather information and their inputs on best practices and preferred communication channels; language, tools and channels for communication, influencers and sensitisation agents.

A desk review of existing communication strategies, policies and ECOWAS interventions in the peace and security sector for best practices to enrich the process was also undertaken.

A quantitative questionnaire was further administered on stakeholders, within and outside the ECOWAS Commission, the EU, and pre-identified interest groups for additional inputs, perspectives, and solutions for the attainment of the objectives of the strategy.

This approach provided an informed basis for the strategic conclusions contained in this strategy document which if successfully implemented are capable of facilitating the achievement of the communication objectives enumerated above.

The rapid assessment of the project management indicates the need for clear-cut guidelines to ensure coherence and consistency in messaging, tools and visibility actions involving partners with a stake in the project. The goal is to demonstrate that the Project is owned by ECOWAS (as the beneficiary), funded by the European Union, and with both institutions working with other partners/stakeholders in creating community awareness to enable ECOWAS to deliver its "Peace and Security" mandate and ensure a conducive environment for development in the region during the project implementation cycle. Below are the communication and visibility challenges/gaps identified by the rapid assessment, desk review and feedback from the quantitative questionnaires:

4. Challenges of Communication & Visibility Gaps that could mitigate EU-ECOWAS PSS Project implementation

Below are the communication and visibility gaps/challenges that must be addressed to ensure that the Project implementation is not jeopardised.

4.1. Policy/Governance

- Lack of an ECOWAS institutional Communication and Visibility Strategy to guide the departments, directorates, divisions and units on issues regarding effective communication and visibility of ECOWAS activities, programmes and projects, and their objectives
- Disconnect between policy and operational implementation of decisions, programmes/projects to achieve the desired results
- Capacity deficiency at various institutional levels for effective implementation of ECOWAS programmes/projects
- At the regional and national levels, there are platforms such as the Network of National Human Rights Institutions, Network of Civil Society Movements, the West African Civil

Society Forum (WACSOFF), the ECOWAS Early Warning System (ECWARN), as well as the West Africa Network for Peace-building (WANEP). But there is no deliberate regional policy for sustained engagement and coordination to optimise the benefits of this mechanism for the enhancement of peace and security, democracy and good governance in the region.

- Poor perception of gender issues resulting in partial/limited engagement of women and youth or their umbrella organisations on the ECOWAS peace and security matters.
- Lack of strategic linkage and synergy between policy decisions and operations resulting in weak programmatic and operational implementation of programmes and projects.
- Lack of understanding of clear objectives of programmes/projects on who does what, when, how and for whom?

4.2 Programmatic

- Wide knowledge gap around the reputation, achievements and result/impact of ECOWAS, its activities, programmes/projects, as a regional economic bloc, with the departments, directorates, divisions and units functioning as “islands,” and each struggling to develop its own Communication and visibility strategy with the attendant problems of standard, consistency and sustainability
- Lack of effective coordination mechanism or information sharing among the various departments, directorates, divisions and Units
- Poor knowledge and understanding of ECOWAS’ involvement in peace keeping efforts and the role of the DPKRS
- Limited awareness about the ECOWAS Electoral Assistance Programme, which seeks to help member States to prevent or manage election-related violence/crises, which are major sources of insecurity and instability in the region

4.3. Branding

- Lack of branding policy (use of different/inconsistent ECOWAS logos),
- Lack of quality control in publications (Press Release etc.) and public presentation of ECOWAS

4.4. Media Engagement

- Haphazard media engagement
- Challenge of access to information by the media and the public
- Uncoordinated interface between ECOWAS and the media as a result of ineffective Spokesperson mechanism
- ECOWAS activities, programmes and projects are not adequately publicised
- Poor awareness and negative public perception, which exposes the organisation to the risk of image/identity and reputation management crisis
- Different largely dormant Portals/websites on different programmes/projects e.g. for ECPF; Peace Fund, ECOWAS Gender Centre, Community Development Programme, EPA etc., without a coherent standard or coordinated presentation of institutional web presence
- Lack of standard projection to the media of the linkage between different ECOWAS programmes/projects

4.5. M & E

Information about and data from ECOWAS and its activities, programmes/project are scanty, and no integrated data base, with the result that the impact/benefits of the organisation's activities are difficult to measure

4.6. Partnership

- Low level of awareness about the role, responsibilities, objectives and mandate of PAPS, EPF
- Limited awareness about the scope and benefits of mutually beneficial collaboration between ECOWAS and its development partners and donors, such as the EU
- Lack of visibility of partnership programmes/projects such as the EU-ECOWAS PSS project
- Inability to maximise and sustain external support due to insufficient awareness of on-going partnership programmes
- Lack of database for effective early warning system

5. Target groups identified by the strategy

The two target groups identified for the communication and visibility messages, actions/activities are:

5.1. Primary Targets

The ECOWAS Commission (PAPS Department):

- Directorates of Political Affairs, Early Warning, Peace-Keeping and Regional Security (DPKRS) and the Peace Fund (EPF) Division,
- Directorate of Humanitarian and Social Affairs,
- Directorate of External Relations,
- Directorate of Gender, CSOs, Youth Development
- EU
- UNDP (ECOWAS-EU Small Arms Programme, part of the EU-ECOWAS PSS Project has a Strategy and Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) on Communication, Advocacy and Visibility for the ECOWAS/EU SALW Project). This has to be harmonised with the global EU-ECOWAS PSS Project Communication and Visibility Strategy and Action Plan to avoid duplication and to ensure consistency, synergy, coordination and efficient results in the implementation of the PSS Project.

5.2 Secondary Targets

- ECOWAS Member States through the ECOWAS Permanent/Special Representatives and National Offices
- CSOs (Grant to CSOs from the EU-ECOWAS PSS Project)
- Media
- Military and civilian components of the ECOWAS Standby Force (ESF)
- Law enforcement agencies – Police/Gendarmerie, Customs, etc.,
- Women and youth groups
- Political, opinion and religious leaders, Community citizens, general population.

5.3 Key content for messages on the EU-ECOWAS PSS Project:

- ECOWAS and the EU working together to promote peace, security, and stability in the ECOWAS region
- ECOWAS and the EU strengthening the capacities of ECOWAS institutions for proactive prevention, management and resolution of conflicts in West Africa

Proposed Slogan: *EU-ECOWAS PSS Project - "ECOWAS and EU: A partnership that works for sustainable peace, security, and development of West Africa" (Actual messages and slogan to be developed through an experts' meeting and validated/adopted for use by stakeholders).*

6. Implementing the Strategy

The basket of communication and visibility actions/activities and tools listed below will be deployed to address the communication and visibility gaps/challenges identified above and facilitate the implementation of the EU-ECOWAS PSS Project taking into cognisance the two mutually supportive and interdependent results of the Project, envisioned in the twin-track approach:

- Strengthening ECOWAS Commission's institutional capacities in conflict prevention and resolution at Regional and National level (**Result 1**), and
- Enhancing the implementation of selected components of the ECOWAS Conflict Prevention Framework (ECPF)(**Result 2**).

The communication and visibility actions/activities are divided into four broad categories:

6.1. Advocacy and stakeholder engagement Actions/activities

These are for sustained stakeholder engagement and commitment to the goals/objectives of the project (suggested project slogan, key components of the messages, Project progress reports prepared, shared and widely circulated).

- Publicity for Project Coordination Committee meetings; PAPS Directors meetings, synergy meetings linking all stakeholders etc.), build strong relationship between implementation partners through the meetings and interpersonal discussions among partner organisations EU and ECOWAS)
- Advocacy to strengthen visibility activities of ECOWAS External Relations directorate especially in stakeholder cooperation and coordination on the EU-ECOWAS PSS project
- Advocacy to military and civilian components of ECOWAS Standby Force, security agencies covered by DPKRS activities, harmonised implementation of this strategy and action plan with the strategic plan for the UNDP implemented SALW programme
- Visibility for gender equality/mainstreaming and affirmative actions under the Gender, women and youth development directorate
- Advocacy to community citizens through activities of ECOWAS Permanent/Special Representatives and National Offices
- Advocacy to CSOs, NGOs, non-state actors through the CSOs grant activities

- Advocacy to raise awareness of election monitoring bodies, the electorate and human rights and rule of law institutions at regional and national levels through activities of the political affairs directorate
- Advocacy to stakeholders through Early Warning directorate activities to strengthen conflict alert and prevention mechanisms in member States
- Advocacy to strengthen humanitarian responses under activities of the Humanitarian and social affairs directorate
- Establishment of “**ECOWAS Peace Ambassador/s**” role for individuals with celebrity status to be involved in a range of advocacy activities including organised tours of ECOWAS member States and interaction with stakeholders and project implementation partners. The goal is to raise awareness for the EU-ECOWAS PSS Project, EU support and the benefits of the partnership in promoting peace and security in the ECOWAS region.
- **Logos:** EU and ECOWAS logos must be prominently displayed (ECOWAS on the left-hand side and EU on the right-hand side) on all project publications and materials including at project related events and on equipment for enhanced “visual identity.”

6.2. Communication via Media Channels

Training/workshop/s for journalists on the Project, **Periodic press conferences or meetings** with journalists on news generating events (trainers/speakers from EU and ECOWAS), topics agreed by partners, and respect for the use of the three ECOWAS official languages - English, French and Portuguese, or local language where possible.

- **Periodic Press releases** on project related events/activities produced, validated and widely circulated
- Production of **Press kits** (containing, **fact sheets, flyers**, and various **Education, Information and Communication (EIC) materials**)
- Proactive engagement of the media including prompt invitation to Project related activities/events, **media break-outs, interviews or information sessions** with key project partners as well as **appearances on radio and Television** facilitated for Project partner organisation officials, with quality controlled talking points

Apart from the media in member States, regional/international media should also be targeted.

- Information material - **Leaflets, Newsletters, Factsheets, Brochures** etc., to be produced at agreed intervals on the project, containing project updates, progress report, goals as well as on-going and planned activities, success stories/achievements
- Publication of human angle **Short Stories and Op-Eds** on the project
- Media coverage organised for **training/workshops/seminars** for Military and Civilian components of ECOWAS Standby Force, CSOs, Women and Youth organisations of member States etc.
- Audio-visual products –**TV Documentaries** on the PSS Project, highlighting EU support, project implementation, progress report, expected results etc.,
- Development of **Photo, Audio-visual news release Libraries** on the project
- Finalisation and circulation of project related documents developed by PAPS and EPF to enrich the project database

6.3. Promotion Activities and Materials

Production of banners, posters, flags, flyers, folders, and branded **note-pads and note-books, T-shirts, bags, caps, pens, USB hubs, key rings etc.** bearing the project name, logos of EU and ECOWAS, and where appropriate, indicating that project **“Funded/Supported by the EU.”**

6.4. Online/Internet/Web related Information and Communication Activities

A **Project Website** to be developed with links to the web pages of ECOWAS Commission and the EU. This should be dynamic, user friendly, interactive and regularly updated with relevant facts and figures, news and briefings on the project to engender sustained engagement of stakeholders, interest groups, the community and the general public on the project related actions/activities. Harmonisation of all portals/websites related to the project.

- Development of **Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube** accounts to expand the outreach and visibility of the Project

In addition, emails with selected information, such as press releases. Newsletters, web stories, and reports should be circulated regularly to selected stakeholders. Such email will include a link to the project website to boost the project web presence.

Some of the communication and visibility actions/activities have no cost implications and those with costs are indicated in the Budget for the Action Plan below.

In order to effectively address the communication and visibility gaps/challenges identified above, in view of the capacity deficiency of the Communication Directorate, it is strongly recommended that a Communication/visibility Cell or Unit should be embedded in PAPS and EPF to drive the successful implementation of the project communication and visibility strategy and Action Plan. Enhancing the capacity of PAPS and EPF through this strategy will not only create greater awareness about their roles, responsibilities, and activities but will also promote visibility for the EU-ECOWAS PSS Project and assist ECOWAS to realise its peace and security mandate.

7. Communication and Visibility Action/Implementation Plan

Flowing from the strategy, this Communication and visibility Action Plan document contains actions/activities and tools to be deployed to build/raise awareness about the EU-ECOWAS PSS Project throughout the three-year project implementation period until 2019 to achieve the following results:

- a. Create and raise the awareness of relevant stakeholders and audiences on the rationale and need for the implementation of the PSS Project, the EU support to the project, the expected results/benefits and the impact of the project for the ECOWAS region
- b. Create a positive corporate identity for the project using appropriate communication tools/materials that project a good public image

- c. Sensitise stakeholders on the need for strong commitment to, ownership, collaboration, and coordination for the effective implementation of the Project
- d. Create awareness and sustained provide visibility to the project activities and impact , and on the EU-ECOWAS partnership in promoting peace and security in the ECOWAS region
- e. Advocacy to boost policy, political commitment and political support for the project at the regional and national level to strengthen local ownership and sustainability of on-going projects and attracting support for future projects
- f. Advocacy to strengthen the capacity of ECOWAS institutions (especially PAPS and EPF), and on the implementation of thematic aspects of ECPF to enable ECOWAS to deliver on its peace and security mandate

This Action Plan will also address the communication and visibility gaps related to the capacity deficit of PAPS, the internal lead department for the realisation of the ECOWAS Peace and Security mandate as well as the Peace Fund Division, which has the mission of interfacing with partners/donors to mobilise funds in support of activities and initiatives for conflict prevention, management, resolution, peacekeeping, peace-building and recovery for the purpose of promoting durable peace and human security across the West Africa region.

Some of the communication and visibility actions/activities have no cost implications and those with costs are indicated in the Budget and the Action Plan below.

In order to address effectively, the communication and visibility gaps/challenges identified above, flowing from the capacity deficiency of the Communication Directorate, it is strongly recommended that a Communication/visibility Cell or Unit should be embedded in PAPS and EPF to drive the successful implementation of the project communication and visibility strategy and the following Action Plan. Enhancing the capacity of PAPS and EPF through this strategy will not only create greater awareness about their roles, responsibilities, and activities but will also promote visibility for the EU-ECOWAS PSS Project and assist ECOWAS to realise its peace and security mandate.

The implementation of the actions/activities described in this Communication and visibility Plan will be evaluated within agreed intervals to ensure successful implementation of the activities and the realisation of the project communication and visibility strategy goals. The evaluation will involve the relevant stakeholders, including the ECOWAS Communication Directorate.

7.1. Budget

An amount of 300,000 Euro has been earmarked for Communication and Visibility actions/activities under the EU-ECOWAS PSS project grant agreement. However, a pragmatic approach dictates that a communication and visibility strategy or plan without an appropriate enabling environment, structure or system that will ensure successful implementation will defeat the objectives behind the development of the strategy/plan in the first place. Therefore, this plan will contain critically important actions/activities that will ensure that the goals of the EU-ECOWAS PSS Project Communication and Visibility and Action Plan are not only achieved effectively, but also ensure that the implementation strategy meets the letter and spirit of the Grant agreement. It is also critical to use relevant elements of the communication and visibility strategy and action plan to strengthen the

visibility of PAPS and EPF, which anchor the implementation of the PSS project on behalf of ECOWAS. This is consistent with the project objective to:

Provide support to ECOWAS that will enable it to execute its conflict prevention and resolution mandate in a sustainable way, notably by executing a shift from a reactive to a preventive mode in acquiring increased strategic, operational and management capabilities, through the twin-track approach of:

- a. Strengthening the institutional and managerial capacity of ECOWAS Departments and other institutions with responsibility for this sector i.e. the Department for Political Affairs, Peace and Security and the ECOWAS Peace Fund. **(Result 1)**
- b. Supporting the development and implementation of Plans of Action of selected components of the ECOWAS Conflict Prevention Framework (ECPF). **(Result 2).**

The under-listed actions /activities have been recommended based on the fact that “as the major policy framework guiding the EU-ECOWAS PSS project, the ECOWAS Conflict Prevention Framework (ECPF) has as its 15th component and “Enabling Mechanism,” which suggests that ECOWAS shall develop “an aggressive advocacy and communications strategy.” The Mechanism includes Advocacy and Communication; Resource Mobilisation; Cooperation and Monitoring and Evaluation.”

The PSS Project Communication and Visibility strategy and action Plan are therefore, required to contribute to the achievement of the benchmarks for the Enabling Mechanism, specifically for the advocacy and communication section including:

- Awareness promotion of ECOWAS protocols and strategies
- Branding ECOWAS
- Selling ECOWAS
- Document and Publication
- Partnerships

7.2. Actions/Activities:

Below are the set of Actions/Activities to be factored into the budget for the implementation of the Strategy and Action Plan. Some of the actions/activities have no cost implication as shown in **Table 3.**

- ✓ Training/workshop for journalists of ECOWAS member states on the project and proactive engagement of the media
- ✓ Media coverage of project-related events including selected project stakeholder meetings
- ✓ Press conferences: addressed by ECOWAS/EU officials on special occasions
- ✓ Stakeholders’ debates around the Project implementation, impact etc.
- ✓ Development of Project website, Facebook, Twitter and YouTube accounts
- ✓ Production of periodic Newsletters and other visibility materials - - Leaflets, brochures, press kits on the project and its implementation

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- ✓ Creation of a Communication Cell/Unit embedded in PAPS/EPF, to be manned by a senior communication and visibility expert to drive the implementation of the communication and visibility strategy and action plan for the three years of the project implementation cycle (three options: a. hire a full-time staff, b. use consultancy c. use an internal professional staff to be dedicated to communication and visibility of PAPS, EPF and EU-ECOWAS PSS Project for at least three years)
- ✓ Audio-visual products – Production of TV Documentaries on the Project,
- ✓ Development of Photo, audio-visual news release libraries, and database
- ✓ Finalisation and circulation of project related documents developed by PAPS and EPF to enrich the project database
- ✓ Advocacy to strengthen visibility activities of ECOWAS External Relations directorate especially in stakeholder cooperation and coordination on the EU-ECOWAS PSS project
- ✓ Advocacy to military and civilian components of ECOWAS Standby Force and security agencies under DPKRS activities. Harmonise implementation of the communication and visibility plan of the UNDP implemented SALW programme with this global communication and visibility strategy and Action Plan for the PSS project
- ✓ Advocacy to women and youth groups, CSOs, NGOs, non-state actors, and the general population through activities such as implementation of the Gender Election Strategy Framework (GESF) of the Gender, Youth and CSOs directorate. The GESF and Action Plan seeks to enhance women's participation in electoral process and in conflict prevention, mediation, and resolution
- ✓ Support events and activities of the ECOWAS Permanent/Special Representatives and National Offices.
- ✓ Advocacy to raise awareness of election monitoring bodies, the electorate and human rights and rule of law institutions at regional and national levels under the political affairs directorate activities
- ✓ Advocacy to stakeholders through Early Warning Directorate activities to strengthen conflict alert and prevention mechanisms in member States
- ✓ Advocacy to strengthen humanitarian responses under activities of the Humanitarian and social affairs directorate
- ✓ Strengthen visibility on the activities of PAPS and EPF to highlight benefits of EU-ECOWAS

Table 3: Budget Actions/Activities

Activities Planned	Timeframe	Narrative	Cost in Euro	Target audience	Desired Outcome	Means of Verification
Advocacy campaigns and stakeholder engagement						
Slogan and a Key Content of Project Messages	To be ready by end of January 2017, to be used throughout the entire duration of the project		0	All target groups and the wide international public	Raise awareness about the project and create "corporate identity."	Mentioning of the use of slogan and messages by stakeholders Member States, the media, the international community
Media coverage of project-related events including selected project stakeholder meetings - Project Steering and Coordination Committee (PSCC), Experts Meetings, ECOWAS-Development Partners meetings etc.	Whenever appropriate throughout the project cycle		0	EU Delegation in Abuja and in the region, ECOWAS Member States, ECOWAS Commission and partner organizations	Create awareness about the project for enhanced stakeholder cooperation, coordination and sustained participation	Monitoring of media reports
Stakeholders debates around the Project implementation, impact etc.	Flexible, whenever appropriate and convenient		0	As above.	As above	Project progress reports by stakeholders and Monitoring of media reports
Two training /workshops for journalists of ECOWAS Member States on the Project objectives, benefits, EU support and project progress	One in first-quarter of 2017 & second in the last quarter of 2018	One in Abuja (32,000) and the second in Abidjan(33,000)	65.000	National & international Media/journalists	Build & raise awareness about PSS project	Media reports
Set up a Communication and Visibility Cell/Unit embedded in PAPS/EPF, to be manned by a senior communication and	Option (a) At least a P4 staff 114,000 Euro per year for three years of the		342,000	All target groups and the wide international public	Working in collaboration with the ECOWAS Communication	Communication and visibility unit is available. Sustained visibility

<p>visibility expert to drive the implementation of the PSS communication and visibility strategy and action plan (three options: a. Hire a full time staff, b. use consultancy c. use an internal professional staff to be dedicated to communication visibility of PAPS, EPF and EU-ECOWAS PSS Project)</p>	<p>project implementation cycle.</p>				<p>Directorate, create awareness about the PSS project, PAPS and EPF for enhanced stakeholder cooperation, coordination and sustained participation in the EU-ECOWAS partnership to promote peace and security in West Africa</p>	<p>built for the project and capacity is strengthened for PAPS and EPF to deliver on their mandate</p>
<p>Create ECOWAS Peace and Security Ambassador/s role to be performed by individual/s with celebrity status to be involved in a range of advocacy activities including tour of Member States</p>	<p>Identification of at least one Ambassador in the first quarter of 2017</p>	<p>At least two tours by the Ambassador</p>	<p>0</p>	<p>All target groups and the wide international public</p>	<p>Raise awareness about EU-ECOWAS partnership and interventions to promote peace and security in the region</p>	<p>Existence of Peace ambassadors and sustained visibility around the PSS project activities</p>

Online/Web related Information and Communication Activities

Develop, launch and regularly update project Website with Facebook , Twitter and YouTube accounts to be linked to the ECOWAS Commission's and EU Delegation's websites	To be launched first quarter of 2017, elaborated and updated throughout the project cycle by the suggested Communication and Visibility unit domiciled in PAPS and EPF	40,000	All project target groups as well as the international public	Build positive information/knowledge about the PSS project and the EU/ECOWAS partnership	Professional web content available with anticipated increase in the number of visits/hits to the web link
Communication via Media Channels					
Press conferences addressed by ECOWAS and EU officials on special occasions highlighting PSS project progress	At least five (two a year 2017 and 2018 and one in 2019 to highlight particular project events/activities throughout project implementation cycle	7,500	Media and project partners as attendees	Raising public awareness about EU-ECOWAS partnership as well as project activities and achievements	Publications in print media, radio emissions, TV broadcasts
Produce project Newsletter to be disseminated widely among project stakeholders, media and the public	Two editions a year, (6) for the three years of project cycle	50,000	The newsletter distributed using a list of representatives of all the project target groups outlined in the project document and others	Newsletters available every six months; ECOWAS, EU and PSS project activities, progress and achievements	The impact will be difficult to measure quantitatively, but the project team will monitor feedback about the project collected through interactions with stakeholders, representatives of Member States as well as the donor

<p>Periodic Press releases will be written and circulated widely to the media and stakeholders on the project events /activities</p>	<p>Whenever appropriate, depending on project events/activities (At least 12 during the project implementation cycle</p>	<p>0</p>	<p>0</p>	<p>Press releases will be distributed using a comprehensive media list</p>	<p>Press releases and dissemination list available; information included in media articles, radio broadcast and TV broadcast; the public more aware about the project as well as the EU-ECOWAS joint efforts and achievements on peace and security in West Africa</p>	<p>community. There will be projected increase in media coverage and requests for information about the project</p>
<p>Invite the media to project activities and events, such as trainings/workshops and meetings organised by PAPS directorates, EPF, and other directorates with stake in PSS project benchmarked by ECPF, including on gender mainstreaming and participation of women in politics as well as in conflict prevention, mediation and resolution</p>	<p>Media expected to receive invitations to at least two activities a year (6) for three years</p>	<p>3,000 per event, two per year times 3years</p>	<p>18,000</p>	<p>Nation and international media</p>	<p>Public made more aware about PSS project activities</p>	<p>Quantitative might be difficult to measure , but the project team will monitor feedback collected through engagements with stakeholders, representatives of Member States as well as the donor community. Media coverage and requests for information about the project is expected to rise.</p>
<p></p>	<p></p>	<p></p>	<p></p>	<p></p>	<p>Number of activities and information tours press representatives have participated in, related articles, broadcasts from the media coverage</p>	<p></p>

Stakeholder engagements for TV and radio slots/broadcasts, debates, discussions and/or interviews	As appropriate, throughout project duration	0	0	National and international media	Wider public informed of project activities	Number of broadcasts on the project
Produce TV Documentaries on the PSS Project activities and events	At least one 30-minute documentary on the project activities, implementation, progress and achievements.		40,000	Documentaries distributed to media outlets under ECOWAS MOU	Community citizens informed about the project and the EU-ECOWAS partnership	Documentaries available. Implementation can monitor impact through stakeholder engagements and broadcasts by the media
Build Photo, audio-visual news release libraries and database.	Throughout project implementation cycle		10,000	All project target groups and the wide international public	Raise public awareness on the PSS Project, EU-ECOWAS partnership	Requests for information from the database
Promotion Activities & Materials						
Produce design template of project-branded material (such as folders, T-shirts, bags, caps, note-books, pens, posters, stand-up banners, hanging banners, USB hubs, key rings etc.) containing information that the project is supported by the EU	Design template to be ready and validated by first quarter 2017 and used for the branding material to be procured on need basis for events/activities and updated throughout the project implantation cycle	100,000 for the entire duration of project (graphic designer and production of the branding materials)	70,000	All project target groups as well as the wide international public, participants of trainings	Generate awareness on the project and create "corporate identity," material available and distributed to training participants, media etc. raising public awareness about and identification with the EU-ECOWAS PSS project, its goals and	Quantitative measurement of impact might be difficult, but the project team will monitor feedback through interactions with stakeholders, representatives of Member States and the donor community with anticipated increased media coverage and requests for

8. Recommendations

The recommendations below will facilitate the effective implementation of the EU-ECOWAS PSS Project with enhanced visibility for the project through the implementation of the Communication and Visibility Strategy and accompanying Action Plan

- a. Adherence to and respect for the “corporate identity” of the EU-ECOWAS PSS Project to be developed through the implementation of the communication and visibility strategy and Action Plan.
- b. Need for enhanced internal communication, information sharing, cooperation and coordination among the different ECOWAS Departments, Directorates, Divisions and Units with stake in the PSS Project
- c. Greater coordination between ECOWAS as owner and beneficiary and partners, EU as funder of PSS project, UNDP as part implementer and other stakeholders for the effective implementation of the PSS Project leveraging the communication and visibility strategy and Action Plan to boost visibility of ECOWAS, PAPS and EPF, EU and the benefits of the project
- d. The Strategy and Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) on Communication, Advocacy and Visibility for the ECOWAS/EU SALW Programme under the PSS Project, should be harmonised with the global EU-ECOWAS PSS Project Communication and Visibility Strategy and Action Plan. This is to avoid duplication and ensure consistency, synergy, coordination and efficient results in the implementation of the PSS Project.
- e. Inclusion of progress report on the implementation of the EU-ECOWAS PSS Project in the **ECOWAS Commission President’s Annual Report** to the Council of Ministers and the Authority of ECOWAS Heads of State of Government
- f. Critical need for an institutional Communication and Visibility Strategy/Plan in ECOWAS to guide the departments, directorates, divisions and units; and ECOWAS and its partners
- g. Urgent need for a Communication/Visibility Cell/Unit to be embedded in the PAPS/EPF, which will collaborate with the ECOWAS Commission’s Communication Directorate to drive the implementation of the EU-ECOWAS PSS Project’s Communication and Visibility Action Plan. The cell/unit should be manned by a senior communication and visibility expert. (three options: a. Hire a full time staff b. use consultancy c. use an internal professional staff to be dedicated to communication and visibility of PAPS, EPF and EU-ECOWAS PSS Project for at least three years).
- h. Development of database on the EU-ECOWAS PSS Project and implementation activities
- i. Coordinated consultations of stakeholders in the development of and harmonisation of various communication and visibility strategy/plans for various ECOWAS projects
- j. Standardised corporate identity for ECOWAS and its programmes/projects and consistent visibility actions including for donor-funded ones
- k. Proactive engagement of media channels, consistency in messaging, sensitisation and advocacy campaign actions
- l. Robust sensitisation and mobilisation of CSOs, women, youth, the military/security agencies and general community citizens for enhanced awareness, participation and support for

ECOWAS interventions in the peace and security domain with particular focus on the benefits of the EU-ECOWAS PSS project. This will assist ECOWAS in delivering on its regional peace, security, stability and development mandate

- m. Creation of ECOWAS Peace Ambassador/s role to be performed by individuals with celebrity status to be involved in a range of promotional activities including tour of member States to raise awareness about EU-ECOWAS partnership and interventions to promote peace and security in the region
- n. Communication and visibility should not be treated as an “after thought” but an integral component of ECOWAS programmes/projects from inception to implementation levels

9. Communication & Visibility Strategy Logical Framework

Intervention Logic		Objectively Verifiable Indicators	Baseline	Targets	Source of Verification	Assumptions/Risks
Impact/Overall Objective of PSS Project	To contribute building and maintaining Peace, Security and Stability in West Africa to ensure a conducive environment for development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Peaceful solutions found to intractable disputes Peace-building processes sustained in the Region 	2015 Global Peace Index (GPI) report shows that West Africa scored an average of 2.199 out of the scale of 1 (very peaceful) to 5 (very violent). <ul style="list-style-type: none"> MDF Mission in 2015: LTEOMS: 3 in 2016 5 MS in 2016 1 MS in 2015 (Ghana) 0 MS in 2015 	Level of Global Peace Index <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regional structures: Integrated ES with up to date contingency plan # of deployments of Council of the Wise # of Permanent Representative offices established Strategic communication plan for EST Annual CSO Regional Human Rights Report TCE's with upgraded training capacity in current P&S themes Functioning ECONEC secretariat National structures in place # of National Maritime Security Councils in MS # of National Peace Councils in MS 	www.visionofhumanity.org Global Peace Index annual reports	Funding obtained
Outcome/Purpose of PSS Project	To provide support to ECOWAS that will enable it to execute its conflict prevention and resolution mandate in a sustainable way, notably by executing a shift from a reactive to a preventive and resilient mode in acquiring increased strategic, operational and management capacities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of regional strategies for conflicts prevention & resolution developed and put into action by ECOWAS Number of tools and instruments for conflict prevention and mitigation response mainstreamed at Member State level 			ECOWAS documents/publications Project document: baseline surveys, evaluation reports, budget and expenditure reports, minutes/reports of Steering Committee meetings, number and quality of reports increases, statistical reports ECOWAS Heads of State Summits AU/UN Security Council resolutions and statements. Review and assessments of the general political and security situation in the region by the ECOWAS Mediation	Political will of ECOWAS Member States to forge ahead in the regional approach to conflict prevention and resolution ECOWAS retains its peace and Security mandates ECOWAS continues to view conflict prevention as priority for regional stability and economic growth Donors/International community remains committed to assist the regional organization in its efforts to prevent

<p>Output/Results of Communication & Visibility Strategy & Action Plan</p>	<p>1. Positive corporate identity for the PSS project is created using appropriate communication tools/materials that project a good public image</p> <p>2. Stakeholders are sensitised on the need for strong commitment to ownership, collaboration and coordination for the effective implementation of the Project</p>	<p>• Logo of ECOWAS and EU are identifiable as unique and consistent graphic identification on project reports, publications, assets and products</p> <p>• Number of stakeholders sensitised</p> <p>• Number of TV roundtables and Radio talks held by stakeholders</p>	<p>• Existing ECOWAS + EU logos on projects, publications, assets and products are not consistent</p> <p>• 0 stakeholders sensitised</p> <p>• 0 TV and Radio talks</p>	<p>• # of National Human Rights Institutions with "A" status in MS</p> <p>• # of functioning SALW registries</p>	<p>and Security Council</p> <p>• ECOWAS, EU and PSS project documents/publications</p> <p>• Sensitisation session reports</p> <p>• Reports and feedback on the TV talks and Radio roundtables</p>	<p>conflicts and promote democracy throughout the region through diplomatic and development aid channels</p> <p>• Stakeholders commit to adopting proposed project identification</p> <p>Sensitisation & advocacy campaigns effective, well packaged</p>
<p>3. Awareness and sustained visibility is created on the project activities and impact, and on the EU-ECOWAS partnership in promoting peace and security in the ECOWAS region</p>	<p>• Number of journalists trained</p> <p>• Number of Stakeholders meetings held</p> <p>• Launch Project Website, Facebook, Tweeter & YouTube account linked to EU and ECOWAS websites</p> <p>• Number of Press Conferences</p> <p>• Number of Press Releases</p> <p>• Number of Newsletter</p> <p>• Number of Project Documentary</p> <p>• Number of Photo, audio</p>	<p>• Rapid assessment shows no communication & visibility structure on ground</p>	<p>• A total of 80 journalists from 15 Member States trained in # 2 sessions by 2019 (one session in Abuja and the second in Abidjan)</p> <p>• # 1 Project website</p> <p>• Media to cover # 6 stakeholder meetings by 2019</p> <p>• # 15 Press Releases (5 per year)</p> <p>• # 7 Newsletters (2 each in 2017/2018 and 1 in 2019)</p> <p>• # 1 Project documentary by 2018</p>	<p>• Increased # of journalists trained on PSS Project</p> <p>• Media feedback & Meetings reports</p> <p>• Number of Promotion items</p>	<p>Proactive advocacy campaigns with effective communication & visibility tools available</p>	

					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • # 1 Photo, audio-visual library & database • # 120,000 each of branded promotion items for the project life cycle (folders, T-shirts, bags, caps, note-books, pens, key rings, banners, USB hubs) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reports of National Offices, ECOWAS representatives, member States • Project reports 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ECOWAS national and representatives' offices buy-in and support implementation of PSS Project
					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • # 1 Communication & Visibility Cell/Unit set up to implement the basket of Communication and Visibility actions/activities outlined in the Strategy and Action Plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communication & Visibility Cell/Unit in existence 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Resources mobilised for the establishment of the Communication and Visibility Cell/Unit and availability of communication tools
					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Permanent/Special Representatives in seven Member States and National offices in 15 Member States 		
					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inactive EPF and ECPF websites 		
					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nomination of Peace & Security Ambassador/s by first quarter of 2017 to tour Member States facilitated by ECOWAS Representative and National offices 		
					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of Communication and visibility • Cell/Unit set up (staffed and equipped) 		
					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Capacity of ECOWAS institutions (especially PAPS and EPF) are strengthened with the creation of Communication & Visibility Cell/Unit for effective implementation of PSS project to enable ECOWAS to deliver on its peace and security mandate 		
					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 4. Advocacy undertaken to boost policy, political commitment and support for the project at the regional and national level to strengthen local ownership and sustainability of on-going projects and attracting support for future projects 5. Capacity of ECOWAS institutions (especially PAPS and EPF) are strengthened with the creation of Communication & Visibility Cell/Unit for effective implementation of PSS project to enable ECOWAS to deliver on its peace and security mandate 		

ACTIVITIES

Specific Objectives	Main Activities	Cost in Euro
1. Create a positive corporate identity	1.1 ECOWAS + EU Logos, Slogan and Project Messages	000
2. Sensitise stakeholders	2.1 Media coverage of project-related events including selected project stakeholder meetings - Project Steering and Coordination Committee (PSCC), Experts Meetings, ECOWAS-Development Partners meetings, etc	000
	2.2 Produce project Newsletter to be disseminated widely among project stakeholders, media and the public	50 000
3. Create awareness and sustained visibility	3.1 Stakeholders debates around the Project implementation, impact etc.	000
	3.2 Training/workshops (2) for journalists of ECOWAS member States on the Project objectives, benefits, EU support and project progress	65 000
	3.3 Develop, launch and regularly update project Website with Facebook, Twitter and YouTube accounts to be linked to the ECOWAS Commission's and EU Delegation's websites	40 000
	3.4 Press conferences addressed by ECOWAS and EU officials on special occasions highlighting PSS project progress	7 500
	3.5 Periodic Press releases written and circulated widely to the media and stakeholders on the project events/activities	000
	3.6 Media invitation to project activities and events and meetings organised by PAPS directorates, EPF, and other PSS project stakeholder directorates	18 000
	3.7 Stakeholder engagements for TV and radio slots/broadcasts, debates, discussions and/or interviews	000
	3.8 TV Documentaries on the PSS Project activities and events	40 000
	3.9 Photo, audio-visual news release libraries and database	10 000
	3.10 Produce design template of project-branded materials - folders, T-shirts, bags, caps, note-books, pens, posters, stand-up banners, hanging banners, USB hubs, key rings etc.) containing information that the project is supported by the EU	70,000
4. Advocacy to boost policy, political commitment and support	4.1 ECOWAS Peace and Security Ambassador/s role to be performed by individual/s with celebrity status to be involved in a range of advocacy activities including tour of member States	000
5.Strengthening ECOWAS institutions Capacity	5.1 Communication and Visibility Cell/Unit embedded in PAPS/EPF, to be manned by a senior communication and visibility expert to drive the implementation of the PSS communication and visibility strategy and action plan (three options: a. Hire a full time staff, b. use consultancy c. use an internal professional staff to be dedicated to communication visibility of PAPS, EPF and EU-ECOWAS PSS Project)	342 000
TOTAL COST	Project Communication & Visibility Direct Activities	300,500
	Communication & Visibility Cell/Unit set up	342,000
	Grand Total	642,500

Conclusion

The result of the rapid assessment of existing ECOWAS communication and visibility structure, including interview with key stakeholders; desk review of existing communication strategies, policies and ECOWAS interventions in the peace and security sector; and the feedback from the quantitative questionnaire administered on stakeholders revealed critical communication and visibility gaps/challenges that require urgent attention. The under-listed challenges/gaps must be addressed to ensure a successful implementation of the PSS Project leveraging the project's Communication and visibility strategy and Action Plan:

- ❖ Absence of an institutional communication and visibility strategy within ECOWAS;
- ❖ Lack of branding policy (logo etc.), quality control in publications (Press Release etc.) and in the public presentation of ECOWAS
- ❖ Institutional capacity deficiency across the departments, directorates, divisions and units;
- ❖ Poor internal communication and information sharing mechanism;
- ❖ Limited collaboration and coordination or "territorialism"
- ❖ Limited and uncoordinated engagement of non-state actors, CSOs, women youth and general community citizens in many ECOWAS activities;
- ❖ Limited media engagement and advocacy campaigns;
- ❖ Different largely dormant Portals/websites on different ECOWAS programmes/projects
- ❖ Low awareness level of ECOWAS interventions, achievements/success stories;
- ❖ Low level of awareness about the role, responsibilities, objectives and mandate of PAPS, EPF
- ❖ Limited awareness about the scope and benefits of mutually beneficial collaboration between ECOWAS and its development partners and donors, such as the EU
- ❖ Lack of visibility of partnership programmes/projects such as the EU-ECOWAS PSS project
- ❖ Inability to maximize or sustain external support due to insufficient awareness of on-going partnership programmes and therefore, difficulty in attracting more partner support.

With the effective implementation of this Communication and Visibility Strategy and Action Plan, the capacity of PAPS and EPF as the major anchor and driver of activities for the realisation of the ECOWAS peace and security mandate can be enhanced to enable them discharge their roles more effectively and optimize the benefits of the PSS Project and attract more partnership projects/programmes.

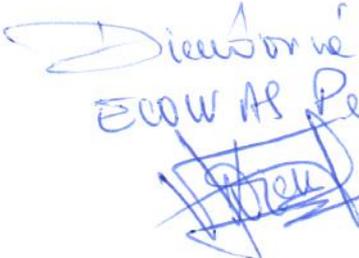
The assessment process undertaken as part of this assignment strongly reinforced the rationale for a robust Communication and Visibility Strategy and an Action Plan for the implementation of the PSS Project. It also informed the recommendations and strategic conclusions, the detailed communication and visibility actions/activities and the stakeholder advocacy measures contained in this strategy document and the Action Plan. If successfully implemented these are capable of addressing the identified communication and visibility gaps/challenges; raising awareness about the EU-ECOWAS PSS Project; with ECOWAS as the beneficiary and EU as the funder, as well as facilitating the project implementation and the realisation of the project objectives which will:

- Contribute to building and maintaining Peace, Security and Stability in West Africa to ensure a conducive environment for development; and

- Provide support to ECOWAS that will enable it to execute its conflict prevention and resolution mandate in a sustainable way, notably by executing a shift from a reactive to a preventive mode in acquiring increased strategic, operational and management capabilities, through the twin-track approach of:
 - c. Strengthening the institutional and managerial capacity of ECOWAS Departments and other institutions with responsibility for this sector i.e. the Department for Political Affairs, Peace and Security and the ECOWAS Peace Fund. **(Result 1)**
 - d. Supporting the development and implementation of Plans of Action of selected components of the ECOWAS Conflict Prevention Framework (ECPF). **(Result 2)**

In consonance with the objectives of the **ECOWAS Vision 2020** and transformation from an **ECOWAS of States to an ECOWAS of People**, there is the need for a system-wide institutional policy that makes communication and visibility an integral part of all key ECOWAS programmes/projects from inception to implementation levels. Many of the gaps identified in this assignment had arisen mainly because communication and visibility were treated as an “after thought.”

ENDORSED BY:


Dieudonné Nkama
ECOWAS Peace Fund Manager
~~31/01/2017~~ 31/01/2017

APPROVED BY:

Name: MRS HARIMA AHMED

Title: COMMISSIONER, POLITICAL AFFAIRS, PEACE & SECURITY

Signature: 

Date: 3rd February, 2017.