



Next Gen Initiative



Senegal Elections



Regional Events



WADEMOS
West Africa Democracy Solidarity Network

WADEMOS BULLETIN

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE WEST AFRICA DEMOCRACY SOLIDARITY NETWORK

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Volume 5



Next G
Initiative

Next Gen Culminating Camp in Ghana



● The first cohort of the Next Gen Initiative in a group photograph with Professor Gyimah-Boadi after an interactive session with him on 'building a new Africa with a new kind of leadership'

Democracy Champions

The West Africa Democracy Solidarity Network (WADEMOS) has mentored 15 young activists selected from across West Africa under its Next Gen Initiative. The Initiative is designed to empower and equip the next generation of leaders with the necessary skills and knowledge to promote social transformation and strengthen democracy in West Africa.

The six-month mentorship program, which commenced in October 2023, encompassed a four-week intensive online session, followed by a two-month mentoring program with a recognized civil society organization, and community-based project work.

According to the Network Coordinator, Paul Osei-Kuffour, the recent spate of democratic decline in West Africa necessitates the grooming of a new crop of leaders to forge a new path for the sub-region and the continent.

Addressing the first cohort at a closing ceremony held at the CDD-Ghana office in Accra, WADEMOS Project Director, Prof. Prempeh, admonished the Young Leaders to forge meaningful relationships that will contribute to breaking the barriers that divide citizens of the sub-region. The WADEMOS Project Director also urged the young activists to keep faith in democracy despite the current challenges.

Participants of WADEMOS' Next Gen Initiative are called, "Young Leaders"

The first cohort of the inaugural Next Gen Initiative, selected from over 150 applicants, consists of: Ophelia Awinboma Azure (Ghana), Mark Owusu Twumasi (Ghana), Ndey Fatou Nying (Gambia), Zakari Emmanuel (Nigeria), Ohalete Lynda Chiamaka (Nigeria), Kotobidjo Nehemie (Benin), Sadiya Diallo (Burkina Faso), Diallo Aissatou (Guinea), Rosalia Djedjo (Guinea-Bissau), Malamine Badiane (Senegal), Marina Terry (Sierra Leone), Sialyn Hawah Bockarie (Liberia), Ousman Goulo Abdoulaye (Niger), Pitekellabou-Potchossi Magnudawa (Togo), Tetchi-Yavo N'gbesso Jean-Yves (Cote d'Ivoire).

The culminating camp took place from March 19 to 23, 2024, in Accra, Ghana. It provided an opportunity for participants to meet, interact, and network.

Besides being taken through sessions on leadership, the Young Leaders visited the Kwame Nkrumah Museum to learn about PanAfricanism and the need to break the barriers that hinder cooperation and transnational solidarity. The Young Leaders also undertook fun activities including a boat ride to the Akosombo Dam and abseiling.

Prof. Larry Diamond, a leading scholar in democracy, who was the special guest of honor at the closing ceremony, entreated the Young Leaders to remain active voices in their communities against abuse of power and anti-democratic tendencies by their leaders.

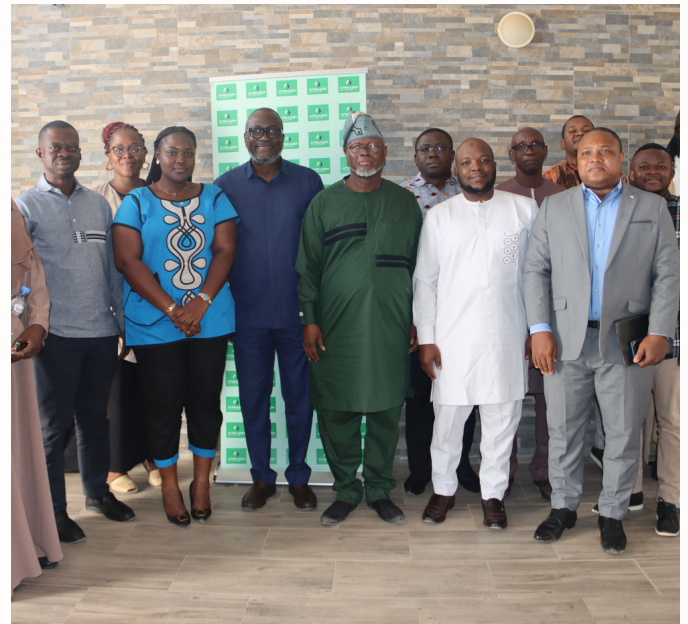


● The Young Leaders in a group picture after receiving their certificates at the closing ceremony

Senegal Election Mission

Pre-election Mission

Senegal held its presidential elections on March 24, 2024, following weeks of uncertainty. Bassirou Diomaye Faye, an opposition candidate won the election and succeeds Macky Sall as the fifth president of the West African nation.



From January 29 to February 5, WADEMOS, led by Professor Prempeh, the Project Director, embarked on a solidarity mission to Senegal. The delegation engaged key stakeholders in the country to understand the political and social context leading up to the elections and to learn lessons from the Senegalese electoral processes. The pre-election mission was also to solidarize with CSOs, amplify their concerns with relevant stakeholders for prompt resolution, and issue evidence-based recommendations for a peaceful election and post-election process.



President Macky Sall on February 3 Indefinitely Postponed the Elections

The observations and recommendations of the Network are contained in a pre-election report. Additionally, all statements issued about the elections and related matters are published on the site.

www.wademosnetwork.org

Election Mission

Consistent with the Network's election missions, a delegation led by Dr. Kojo Asante was deployed to Senegal to observe the elections and solidarize with CSOs, international bodies, and other institutions observing the election.

As part of the delegation's activities on election day, the team visited the WANEP situation room, the COSCE,

the main coalition of domestic observers in Senegal. The purpose was to share observations, exchange knowledge and learnings, and receive up-to-date information on the voting processes on election day.

The US Ambassador to Senegal also paid a courtesy call to the team to share experiences and deliberate on the electoral processes.



Participation in Regional Events

AU-ECOSOCC Forum in Ghana



WADEMOS participated in the African Union ECOSOCC, Regional Economic Communities, and civil society organization forum on the nexus between migration, climate security, and peace and security.

Represented by the Network's Research Analyst, David Asante-Darko, the discussion focused on how Africa can deal with the effects of climate change, especially in terms of its impact on the region's stability and peace.

Yiaga Africa Conference in Ghana



WADEMOS participated in the Global Democracy Coalition Forum, organized by Yiaga Africa, a member of the Network, in Accra, Ghana.

The forum was organized to examine the impact of technology on democracy, disinformation, and women's participation in politics and governance.

Launch of Horn Center for Democracy



WADEMOS Project Director, Prof. Prempeh represented the Network at the launch of the Horn Center for Democracy.

Participation in Regional Events

Among other issues, the conference highlighted the need for CSOs to advance the concept and practice of defending democracy in the Horn of Africa.

Regional Citizens Dialogue Program



Paul Osei-Kuffour, the WADEMOS Network Coordinator, pledged WADEMOS' commitment to the Regional Citizens Dialogue Platform on Preventing Unconstitutional Changes of Government in West Africa believing that it will strengthen synergies and resilience among institutions in responding to the threat.

Conference on the Creation of ECOWAS-ECOSOCC



WADEMOS Network participated in an ECOWAS stakeholder meeting on the establishment of an ECOSOCC-West Africa. The two-day meeting galvanized CSOs in the sub-region to co-create the platform for achieving a more inclusive and participatory ECOWAS decision-making and governance mechanism.

AU Forum on UCGs in Africa



WADEMOS Project Director, Prof. Prempeh joined a panel to discuss the state of democracy and political governance in Africa at a reflection forum organized by the African Union to deliberate on unconstitutional changes of government.

Secretariat Updates

WADEMOS Supports WIPF Convening



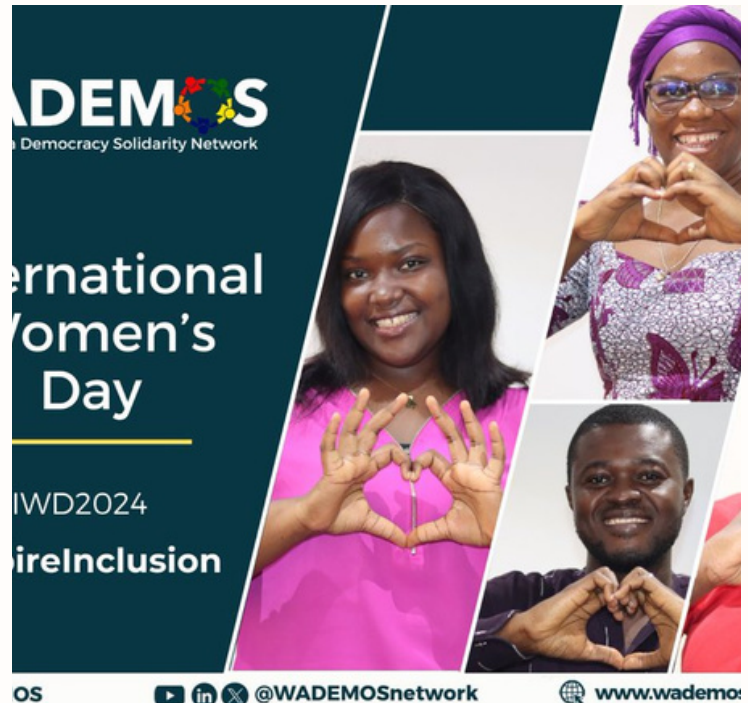
With support from the WADEMOS Network, the Women in Politics Forum (WIPF), a member of the Network, convened a high-level discussion with key parliamentarians and CSO actors on inspiring inclusion in Nigerian politics by developing strategies to ensure the passage of gender-responsive legislation in Nigeria. WADEMOS also participated in a webinar on gender and inclusion in politics hosted by WIPF.

Statement on ECOWAS Lifting Sanctions

Following ECOWAS' lifting of the sanctions placed on countries undergoing political transitions, the WADEMOS Network called on the military-led governments in the sub-region to reciprocate the gesture by demonstrating a greater willingness to engage in dialogue and realign with the transition process.

<https://bit.ly/49xlfRs>

International Women's Day Celebration



To mark International Women's Day, the Secretariat took part in the global celebration by solidarizing with all women around the world. We honored all women who are making the continent and sub-region a better place and expressed our dedication to fostering a gender-sensitive culture and implementing gender-focused activities essential for promoting a democratic and inclusive society in West Africa.

Secretariat Updates

Sida Visit to WADEMOS Secretariat



A delegation from Sida paid a courtesy visit to the WADEMOS Network Secretariat in Ghana. Led by Joachim Beijmo, the Head of Regional Development Cooperation at the Swedish Embassy in Ethiopia, the meeting focused on WADEMOS' impact in the sub-region and Sweden's Regional Strategy for Africa.

The delegation also paid courtesy visits to some members of the WADEMOS Network in Accra, Ghana. The WADEMOS Network is being funded by Sida for the first three years of its implementation.

A Focus on Political Transitions



Political transitions remain a priority of the Network. In this quarter, the Network has continued to support the transition process, including the implementation of the CSO National Level Strategies on Political Transitions jointly developed by Network members from Mali, Burkina Faso, Guinea, and Niger in Conakry last year and facilitated by WADEMOS.

Additionally, advocacy against human rights violations occurring in these spaces has been prioritized.

The Network, in collaboration with pro-democracy actors and regional bodies, is advanced with developing strategies to intervene in the decision of Burkina Faso, Niger and Mali to secede from the ECOWAS sub-regional bloc.

Second Quarter Activities

Women in Peace and Security RTD



WADEMOS Network will, on April 16, 2024, organize a roundtable discussion, in partnership with the Australian High Commission in Ghana.

The goal of this roundtable discussion is to bring together key stakeholders to deliberate on the security challenges in the Sahel and its impact on the economies of West African countries.

Additionally, the discussion will highlight the role of women in peacekeeping and conflict resolution.

Democreative Initiative Launch



WADEMOS and the Ghana Center for Democratic Development, in collaboration with its partners across the sub-region, will launch the “Democreative Initiative” in April 2024.

The rationale is to leverage the influence, reach, and power of artists and art to promote democracy and good governance.

Second Quarter Activities

Validation of Gender Assessment Report



WADEMOS Network will organize a virtual validation workshop to review the findings and observations contained in its gender assessment study.

The workshop will provide a platform for stakeholders to deliberate on the findings and agree on key action points.

Election Review Workshop



Since January 2023, four countries in West Africa have conducted national elections. The Network has observed all these elections through pre-and election-day missions.

The outcome of some of these elections have been questioned, deemed to lack credibility and not acceptable.

WADEMOS will in May convene a stakeholder conference to evaluate and undertake a review of elections within the sub-region to identify the teething challenges and make recommendations for reforms.

Engage with Us!!!

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WADEMOS Webinar

Diomaye Faye has been sworn in as the fifth President of Senegal but the events leading to the election threatened the country's democracy. Join our webinar on Tuesday, April 9 as we discuss how we can build democratic resilience in West Africa with lessons from Senegal.

Register now! <https://bit.ly/3VDj1fc>

A webinar on

Building Democratic Resilience in West Africa with Lessons from Senegal 2024 Elections

Date: Tuesday, April 9, 2024

Time: 10:30am - 12:00pm GMT

Venue: 



Speakers



Jaly Badiane
Senegal Vote



Paul Osei-Kuffour
WADEMOS Network



Aliou Sane
Yen a marre



Sadikh Niasse
RADDHO



Ibrahima Kane
Open Society-Africa (OSF)



Cheikh Fall
Africvistes

Moderator



Borso Tall
Journalist



This webinar is in English, French and Portuguese



Call for Contributions

WADEMOS Network's quarterly newsletter intends to dedicate a section of the publication to the activities of its members and pro-democracy actors. Please send us news, stories, and updates of your activities, upcoming events, pictures from your events, seminars, feedback, and suggestions.

These activities should be related to the priority areas of WADEMOS or our thematic areas. All submissions can be sent to info@wademosnetwork.org or to the Communications Officer, Jonah Eledi, via j.eledi@wademosnetwork.org.

For all our latest publications, press releases, reports and knowledge products, visit the following sections of the website:

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WADEMOS issues several research, analytical and communication pieces.

We want to share your views with the world. Send us your contributions, articles and think pieces via info@wademosnetwork.org or j.eledi@wademosnetwork.org.