

Mano River Women' s Peace Network
Guinea Chapter
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**ACTIVITY
REPORT
2001-2004**

June 2004

I- ACTIVITIES

Year 2001

At the National level

The Network was received by the President of the Republic of Guinea and by a number of Heads of Department including the Minister of Foreign Affairs, the Minister of Fisheries and Aquaculture as well as by Representatives of UN System institutions in Guinea.

The Network held a session with the staff of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in preparation for the meeting of Foreign Ministers and the Joint Security Committee held in Conakry.

June 30- Participation to the student's solidarity day organised by the solidarity movement for vulnerable, which took place in the compound of the university of Conakry library.

July 4- The network had an audience with His Excellency General Lansana CONTE to report on the network's mission to Liberia and to plead with him to enter in a dialogue to promote peace in Liberia.

July 17 -19- Network member Mrs Mariame Kourouma undertook a mission to Kissidougou. During her mission, she contacted refugees in the three (3) camps of Kountaya, Télioro and Albadaria.

July 23 to 28- First meeting of the Network's Board of Directors in Conakry, the opening ceremony of which was chaired by Mrs. Henriette CONTE, First Lady of the Republic of Guinea.

July 24- The network met with the Guinean Head of State who expressed his determination to put an end to the crisis shaking the Mano River Basin.

August- The network met the various regional co-ordinating chapters in maritime Guinea, middle Guinea, upper Guinea and forested Guinea to share views on the situation prevailing in the three countries of the Mano River Union.

September 8 to 10- The Network took part in the meeting held in Conakry on the reactivation of the 15th protocol on defence and security which included the Ministers of Foreign Affairs and members of the MRU Joint Security Committee.

September 25 to 29- Training seminar on mediation and conflict resolution techniques at Mariador Hotel, which included more than forty participants representing Civil Society organisations, Ministerial departments, the University of Conakry, the Economic and Social Council, Religious organisations, private journalists, and the public media, the military and parliamentarians.

October 30 to 31- Mrs Camara Georgette Safo, Network treasurer, took part in the National Symposium for the Culture of Peace in Guinea organised in Conakry by the National Commission Against the Proliferation and Circulation of Illicit Small Arms and Light Weapons.

At the international level

20 to 30 January 2001 : Mrs Kaba Saran Daraba took part in the consultative meeting on the participation of women in conflict resolution in Africa, organised in Tunis by African Leadership Forum in cooperation with the African Women Committee for Peace and Development.

26 to 28 February 2001 - The CENCOD meeting in Accra on demilitarisation and democratisation in West Africa was attended by Mrs Fatou Doré on behalf of the network.

22 to 30 April 2001- Mrs Kaba Saran Daraba and Fatou Doré took part in the Women's Panafrikan Conference and the 29th session of the African Commission on Human and Peoples Rights held in Tripoli, Libya.

10 to 18 May - Mrs Kaba Saran Daraba took part in the 3rd UN Conference on the Least Advanced Countries held in Brussels, Belgium.

17 to 19 May - Mrs Goumou Fatoumata Morgane, Guinea's national coordinator for the Network, took part in the African First Ladies' peace mission in Libreville, Gabon.

3 to 11 June - First General Assembly of the Mano River Women's Peace Network held in Liberia, during which the Bureau of the Board was set up and Mrs Hadja Saran Daraba elected President. Guinea was also given the posts of Treasurer and of Advocacy.

The Network used this opportunity to meet with President Charles TAYLOR and to attend a training session on the techniques of mediation and conflict resolution.

18 to 22 July - The President of the network took part in the United Nations Economic and Social Council session on Africa held in Geneva.

3 to 8 August - Mission of the Mano River Women Peace Network to Freetown (Sierra Leone) to meet with His Excellency El Hadji Ahmed Tejan Kabbah. The Networks used this opportunity to visit other Sierra Leonean authorities and refugee camps.

October - The President of the Network and Mrs Hadja Tiguidanké Diakhaby of the Advocacy Committee took part in the meetings of the Mano River Union Foreign Ministers and the Joint Security Committee held in Freetown.

22 to 26 October - The President of the Network took part in a training session on conflict resolution in Africa held in Cape Town (South Africa).

7 to 11 December - The President took part in the International Peace Academy Conference held in New York.

- The President of the Network took part in the Round Table Conference organised by International Advocacy for Peace at the Rockefeller Centre in New York and had a meeting with the African Division of the State Department and the USAID Director in Washington.

16 to 22 December - Mrs Hadja Tiguidanké Diakhaby in charge of the Advocacy Commission took part in the 25th ECOWAS Heads of State and Government Summit held in Dakar.

Year 2002

At the national level

14 to 17 January - A Liberian Women delegation visited Conakry on a Mission.

January 22 - Using the Guinean TV program “KIBARO”, Mano River Women’s Peace Network made a request for the people of Guinea to fast from **January 28 to 30, 2002**, for peace in the three Mano River Union Countries.

January 28 to February 1 - Training in mediation and conflict resolution techniques held in Faranah. This training session was the first of its kind and was attended by representatives of NGOs, the media, traditional communicators and victims of armed attacks.

February 11 to 22 - Mrs Kalo Assa Camara took part in the training session on humanitarian assistance and international humanitarian law organised by the Ministry of the Interior, Decentralisation and Security held at the Mariador Palace Hotel.

March 8 - Solidarity celebration of the end of the war in Sierra Leone organised at the Sierra Leone Embassy in Conakry. The ceremony was attended by Guinean, Liberian and Sierra Leonean communities under the chairmanship of H.E Michel Kamano, Chairman of the Economic and Social Council of Guinea.

March 28 to 30 - The Network took part in the Mano River Civil Society Movement conference held at Novotel in Conakry.

10 to 14 April - Training held in N'zérékoré on mediation and conflict resolution.

May - Mrs Kaba Saran Daraba and Mrs Kalo Assa Camara represented the Network at a meeting held in Conakry to finalise country analyses with a view to formulating an AIDS Control Program in the Mano River Basin (UNAIDS).

October 21 to 25 - Three members of the Guinean Chapter of the Network took part in the advanced training held in Conakry on conflicts management by women organised by the UN Division on Women Advancement.

Many countries, including Guinea, Senegal, Liberia, Sierra Leone, Zimbabwe, Rwanda, Burundi, South Africa, Ghana, and the Democratic Republic of the Congo, attended the training.

November 4 to 8 - Training in N'Zérékoré on mediation and conflict resolution. Local leaders, university authorities, women associations, trade unionists, social workers, etc. attended the training.

December 4 to 5 - Validation seminar on the draft guide for village mediators held at Camayenne Hotel in Conakry.

December 9 to 12 - Training session on conflict resolution and management for focal points in Ministerial Departments, women political representatives and trade union representatives. The Network used this opportunity to meet with traditional leaders of majority ethnic groups in the country to encourage their involvement in conflict prevention in Guinea.

At the international level

January 07 to 10 - Mrs Kaba Hadja Saran DARABA took part in the African Social Forum held in Bamako.

January 18 - Mrs Kaba Hadja Saran DARABA and Mrs Hadja Tiguidanké Diakhaby took part in the ceremony for the symbolic incineration of 3.000 Small Arms at Lungi, officially marking the end of the war in Sierra Leone.

January 22 to 23 - Mrs Kalo Assa CAMARA visited Maputo (Mozambique) on a mission to participate in a meeting on NEPAD (New Partnership for Africa's Development) and Security in Africa.

March 10 to 17 - Mrs Kaba Hadja Saran DARABA attended an experts' meeting held in New York to finalize a study on "Women and Conflict in the World". This meeting was initiated by the UN Security Council.

Mrs Kaba met with the Norwegian Ambassador to the UN, Current Chairman of the Security Council and the Ambassador of Morocco to the UN. She had working sessions with the African Division of the Political Affairs Division in the Office of the UN Secretary General. The Africa Desk Officer and the European Union Representative to the UN attended this meeting.

March 18 to 22 - Mrs Sangaré Fatou Keira, a member of the Network, attended an international conference on development financing held in Mexico.

March 18 to 22 - Mrs Camara Georgette Safo took part in the Seminar on Peace held in Bamako.

March 18 to 21 - Mrs Gomou Fatoumata MORGANE attended the African "Conference on the Implementation of the United Nations Action Programme on Small Arms: Needs and Partnership" held in South Africa.

March 24 to 25 - Mrs Hadja Tiguidanké Diakhaby and Mrs Diakabé Kaba attended the meeting on the United Nations' role in the activation of the Mano River Union.

April - Mrs Kaba Haja Saran Daraba was elected Chairperson of the Board of Directors of the Foundation for Democracy in West Africa sponsored by OSIWA.

May - The president was part of the Carter Centre Team for the supervision of the presidential and general elections in Sierra Leone.

June 8 to 13 - Mrs Kaba Haja Saran Daraba took part in the World Food Summit held in Rome (Italy).

June - Meeting to finalize the AIDS control project in the Mano River Basin in cooperation with the Mano River Union Secretariat held in Abidjan.

September 2 to 3 - Participation of Madam Goumou Fatoumata Morgane in the workshop on the demobilisation, reintegration and reconciliation process in Sierra Leone organised by the Sierra Leonean NGO **Campaign for Good**

Governance in collaboration with the South African Institute for Justice and Reconciliation.

September - Mrs Kaba Saran DARABA and Hadja Tiguidanké Diakhaby, respectively MARWOPNET Chairperson and Chair of the Network's Advocacy Commission, attended the Ordinary session of ECOWAS Parliament in Abuja from 1st to 15 September 2002.

The Chairperson of MARWOPNET took this occasion to address ECOWAS Parliamentarians about the situation within the Mano River Basin.

20 to 23 September - Participation of Sallay Bayoh, a member of the Network in an international conference on WOMEN FOR PEACE DIALOGUE FOR ACTION HELD at SHARM EL-SHEIKH/ EGYPT. The First Lady of Egypt chaired the Conference.

November 9 to 11 - Participation of Mrs. Kaba Haja Saran Daraba in the OSIWA Board Meetings at Dakar.

ACTIVITIES 2003

From January to May 2003, the following activities were realized by the Guinean Chapter of **MARWOPNET**:

1. Meetings and Working Sessions

It should be noted that the Network met several personalities in the **COFEG** premises, namely:

- Mr. Abodoulaye Lelonma Diallo, External Officers of the International Labour Office. The meeting centered on the strategies and conditions for BIT Cooperation and support to the Network;
- Mr. Boureima Diamitani and Elhadj Mbaye Gueye, respectively Executive Director and Officer, in charge of the WAMP Programme (West African Museums Programme) for the preparations of an international workshop on the "Armed Conflicts, Culture of Peace, and Protection of the Cultural Heritage in West Africa."
- Madam Dominique Gabeloux, Head of Medicins Sans Frontiers (France), for a future exposition between the two institutions.
- Madam Carolyn McAskie, Humanitarian Special Envoy of the UN general secretariat. The purpose of this mission was to discuss issues relating to the Ivorian crisis namely the consequences affecting the countries in the Sub-region.

- The **ECOWAS** Parliament with the Honorable Mouhoum Diallo, speaker of Parliament, and head of the delegation. The delegation met the network to have their views on the situation prevailing in the Mano River Basin Countries
- Mr. Macky Bah and Goita, respectively **ACCORD** Representatives in Guinea and **ACCORD** Regional Director;
- The director of **IRC** (International Rescue Committee) for a cooperation between the Network and his Institution in the framework of assistance to refugees in the Guinea prefectures
- Mr. Abroise James and Patrick Masuba of Talking Drum Audio of Sierra Leone;

Other Activities Realized

- Participation of the Network in the programme "**EPACE CEDEAO**" at the Guinean National Radio Station.
- Participation of Madame Kalo Assa Camara in February, in the Networks development training workshop in humanitarian field in guinea , organized by the Concern Universal Project, co-financed by OCHA, UNICEF, DFA-Ireland Aid, Refugees International, Japan, OXFAM (RU)
- The Network offered a cheque of 600.000Gf (Six hundred thousand Guinean franc) to SENAH for the purchase of a ton of rice intended for the Guinean returnees from Cote D'Ivoire.
- The Network acquired its headquarters in **April 2003** for the professional execution of its activities.
- **May 2003** - A mission was made by the National Coordinator for experience sharing and preparatory agenda for a consolidation of peace in West Africa
- **May 2003** - Participation of the Network President to Paris in a meeting relating to the conflicts in the Mano River Basin and in the Cote d'Ivoire
- **August 2003** - Participation of the Network President in the talks on the Ivorian crisis in Kossombo, Ghana
- **August 2003** - Participation of the Network President in her capacity as a resource person in the training session for Burundian women in the

technique of conflict resolution with the support of the UN Women advancement Division.

- **September 2003** - Inauguration of the headquarters of **MARWOPNET** Guinea Chapter, located in the Minière neighborhood of Conakry.

Present were the representatives of the UN systems in Guinea, institutional partners of the Network, Ambassadors, and administrative representatives of national and international NGOs.

- **November 2003** - The Network signed a letter of understanding with the IRC (International Rescue Committee);
- **December 2003** - Mission of the President and her two deputies received the UN Human Right Prize Award given to the Network on the occasion of the 48th session of the UN General Assembly in New York.
- **December 2003** - A recruitment test was organized by the Network for 8 Permanent Secretaries in the following Prefectures: Forécariah, Kindia, Faranah, Kissidougou, Guékédou, Macenta, N'Zérékoré and Lola. These Permanent Secretaries are responsible for the administrative and financial management of the field offices located in the above prefectures.

Year 2004

- **08 January 2004** - The Network organized a press luncheon at NOVOTEL Hotel for the presentation of the UN Human Right Prize Award received on the 10th December 2003 in New York.
- **20-24 January 2004** - Training of Permanent Secretaries, Focal Points and two members for each prefectural chapter on administration, conflict resolution, team building, etc.
- **February 2004** - Mission of the Network's president and advocacy chairperson to participate in the UN Commission session on the condition of women in New York.
- **06 to 15 March 2004** - Mission of the official installations of the 8 prefectural offices of the network's Guinea chapter. During the ceremonies, which took place in the various prefectures hosting the Network chapters, office equipment was given to each of the offices including: motorbikes and their accessories, and office supplies and furniture.

The 8 offices are open inside the country to enable the network to work with communities at the grassroots level and ensure permanent relations with the authorities and the institutions working in the field.

- **11 to 12 May 2004** - A workshop on the role of men and women in conflict intervention and management was attended by almost 80 participants representing the Network's international partners, ministerial departments, the Network's prefectural chapters, religious authorities, the media, etc.

II CONSTRAINTS AND DIFFICULTIES

MARWOPNET often encounters enormous problems related to the mobilization of material and financial resources.

Communication between the field offices and the national coordinating office is also a factor which delays and affects the exchange of information (lack of computers and internet, phones, etc. at the national and prefectural level).

III. PROSPECTS

In the application of the proposed action plan for the year 2003, **MARWOPNET** expects to execute the following activities before the end of 2004.

1. The holding of the meeting of the management council and the general assembly in Conakry.
2. The creation of a network of traditional communicators of Guinea.
3. The organization of trans-border meetings with the Network's chapters located along the borders.
4. The creation of peace committees responsible for the decentralization process at the village level.
5. The creation of the community radio stations aimed at sensitizing communities in local languages.
6. The socio-professional training and reinsertion of ex-volunteers (recruited during the rebel attacks perpetrated against Guinea in September 2000).
7. The launching of a bilingual news bulletin (French/English) and a pamphlet on the Network.
8. Finally, to meet the pressing demand for trainings in conflict resolution and transformation techniques among the population from the national to the grassroots levels.