

INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK FOR COMBATING DRUG TRAFFICKING IN WEST AFRICA: A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF GUINEA- BISSAU, GUINEA-CONAKRY AND NIGERIA

EMMANUEL UZUEGBU - WILSON (PhD)

Department of International Law and Security Studies,

School of Law and Security Studies,

Babcock University, Iperu-Campus, Ogun State, Nigeria.

E- mail : uzuegbu-wilson@babcock.edu.ng, uzuwilson@yahoo.com.

Abstract

This study discussed the institutional framework for combating drug trafficking in the West Africa sub-region with particular focus on Guinea-Bissau, Guinea-Conakry and Nigeria. The framework ranges from the international, through regional, sub-regional to national levels. This study employed a desk-review research approach with the reports and evaluations obtained from secondary sources of data analyzed through content analysis. The study found that the implementation or domestication processes involving the policies, instruments and programs within the domain at the national level remain either slow or ineffective in majority of the cases reviewed. Comparatively, the impact of institutional policy measures for combating drug trafficking were however found to have been felt more in Nigeria compared to Guinea-Bissau and Guinea-Conakry. The study recommended that Heads of Government should adopt a procedural approach towards domesticating counter-narcotic drug policies, instruments and programs which should consider local realities, most especially in the resilience communities along the trafficking routes in order to ensure that policy measures are functional, effective and efficient across the selected states. Compliance to policy measures taken should also be monitored through periodic assessment procedures adhered to by member states of ECOWAS. National legislation on drug laws should also align with international convention while ensuring that the rule of law is followed.

Keywords: Drug Laws, Drug Trafficking, Institutional Policy, Narcotics.

Introduction

Since 2004, drug trafficking organizations has increasingly used West Africa as a transit area for smuggling large amounts of cocaine from South America into Europe. This trend has remained a great concern to the international community (UNODC, 2018). The region is also hit hard by the growing influence of criminal networks. This has continued to cause “vulnerabilities that particularly affect the youth, exposing them to serious harm” and in recent years the new threats have also aggravated the drug trafficking scourge with the arrival of Amphetamine-type synthetic drugs (UNODC, 2019). The region now has to deal with a “significant increase in the number of clandestine laboratories for the manufacture of synthetic drugs and an alarming increase in local consumption of all kinds of drugs” Council of the European Union (2017).

While West Africa has to cope with multiple threats generated by drug trafficking, “institutional weakness prevails and is particularly evident in the shortcomings of the criminal justice systems and widespread corruption” Council of the European Union (2017). Thus the persistent drug problem in the region and its consequences for “security, the economy, society and health weaken the foundations of the rule of law and seriously undermine economic and human development in the sub-region” Council of the European Union (2017). Regional and international cooperation and coordination no doubt will play a major role in “effectively countering the transnational threats that affect both the continent and the whole international community and in providing a global response to the challenges posed by the drug problem” Council of the European Union (2017).

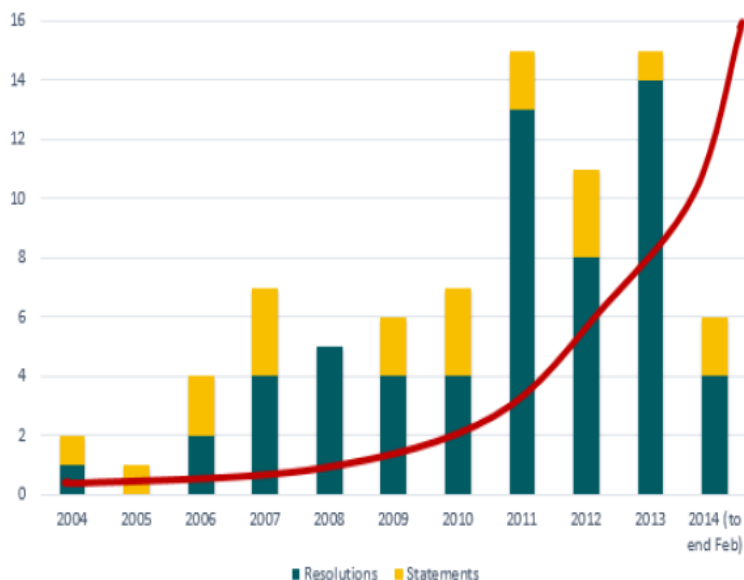
It is important to note that there exist several frameworks for combating the phenomenon of drug trafficking both in general and within the particular countries under study. The framework ranges from the international, through regional to national. As signatory to international and regional instruments, bilateral cooperation and policies in states under comparison are able to adopt measures at the national level that aims at combating the drug trafficking phenomenon. It is also important to note that governmental responses to the challenges of drug trafficking in most West African countries “have been prompted as much by external forces as by domestic ones, even if the motivations for the pressures on West African governments do differ” (Olukoshi,2013,p.14).This study therefore is a comparative study of the institutional framework for combating drug trafficking in Guinea- Bissau, Guinea-Conakry and Nigeria respectively. The study employed a desk-review research approach with the reports and evaluations obtained from secondary sources of data analyzed through content analysis.

Institutional Framework at the International Level

The United Nations have adopted many instruments aimed at controlling the drug trade. Notable ones include integrated agreements like the “1961 Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs, as amended; the 1971 Convention on Psychotropic Substances; and the 1988 Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances” of which more than 95% member states of the United Nations remain parties to all the international drug control treaties.

Others include International Narcotics Control Board, UN Commission on Narcotic Drugs, and UN Office on Drugs and Crime (Rosen, 2015, p.11). These were created in order to “limit the production and use of narcotics and other illicit drugs except for scientific and medical uses” (Segura & Stein, 2013, p.13). The drug problem in the West African region has also been placed on the agenda of the UN Peacebuilding Commission, while UNODC long active in the region continues to provide analysis and technical assistance through its regional and global programmes. The UN Security Council also in response to the drug trafficking menace in West Africa have also adopted several UN Security Council Presidential Statements (S/PRST/2012/2) in which “the UN Secretary-General was urged to consider mainstreaming the issue of drug trafficking as a factor in conflict prevention strategies, conflict analysis , integrated missions assessment and planning and peace building support” in the region (Aning& Pokoo,2014,p.2; Gberie, 2015, p.3). Some graphical representation of the security council Security Council statements and resolution related to organized crime are shown in figure 1 below:

Figure 1: Showing Statements and Resolution of the Security Council related to Organized Crime 2004 – 2014



Source:(Shaw ,Reitano& Hunter,2014,p.4)

The UNODC World Custom Organization (WCO) Container Control Programme (CCP) also aims at building capacity in countries seeking to improve trade security and also facilitation standards and controls within their borders which includes “capability to profile, target and examine containers being used for the transport of illicit goods”(World Custom Organization, 2014,p.11). For operational efficiency,the (CCP) initiated projects sites in some states in West Africa with inter-agency Joint Port Control Units (JPCUs) and include customs, police and other law enforcement structures such as gendarmerie and drug law enforcement agencyUNODC,2016). Other programs developed by UNODC include National Integrated Programs (NIPs).

In responding to the increased shipments of ephedrine and pseudoephedrine to countries in Africa, Central and South America and West Asia, *Operation Crystal Flow* was initiated by the United Nations as a global initiative aimed at monitoring the international trade of precursor chemicals between the Americas, Africa, and West Asia (Feinstein, 2013, p.24). The World Customs Operation (WCO) also initiated ‘Operation Cocair’ with collaboration and support from International Police (INTERPOL) and UNODC , the program is noted as being one of “the most expansive and resource intensive examples of EU-West African cooperation on drug and crime control” and coordinates task force operations in over 30 African countries (Klein,2014,p.11).The UNODC Executive Director and the new European Commissioner for International Cooperation and Development also in Vienna on 3 November 2014 “reaffirmed their commitment to cooperation between the UNODC and the European Union, in particular in West Africa”(Council of the European Union, 2015,p.24).

Most European Development organizations are also involved in strategizing and executing security sector reform projects in West Africa (Klein, 2014, p.7).Assistance for interdiction and prosecution efforts for countries in West Africa has also been received from France, Spain, the United States, the United Kingdom, and the EU (Gberie, 2015, p.4). For example the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) in collaboration with some West African states has helped in the creation of a Vetted Unit. This is because the primary role of the DEA however remains to assist West African as partner nation most notably in the “formation, training and vetting of Special Investigative Units (SIUs)” (Feinstein, 2013, p.22). Aside from that, quite a number of programs have also been instituted by U.S. Africa Command (AFRICOM) that aims at combating transnational organized crime in West Africa. These programs include partnering with nations to increase their law enforcement capabilities , establishing initiatives aimed at curbing money laundering , funding of programs like the “Immigration and Customs and Enforcement (ICE) mentorship program in

Nigeria to enhance airport security and provides financial support for DEA vetted units in the region” (Feinstein,2013,p.24).

The United States counter-narcotic support keep increasing in the region, for example approximately US\$7.5 million support fund in 2009 rose to approximately six- fold increase of US\$50 million per annum (p.a) in 2010 and 2011 showing the increased attention on drug related issues in the region (Aning&Pokoo, 2014,pp.8-9). The increased security concerns coupled with the destabilizing effect that the illicit drug trade is having in the West African region also led African Command (AFRICOM) to commit its resources in the region by allocating \$10 million out of the 19.2 million meant for the AFRICOM 2013 Fiscal Year Budget for the West African region alone which aimed supplementing it additional with \$18 million in recognition of the region’s growing needs (Feinstein,2013:24).

The United States also in 2013 provided a total of \$50 million to combat drug trafficking and other transnational organized crime, through West Africa Coast Initiative (WACI) program. The funds also “propped up a regional law enforcement training center; provided support to Liberia’s Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA); helped develop specially-trained, DEA-vetted counternarcotics investigative units in Ghana; and facilitated anti-corruption training in Sierra Leone” (Gberie,2015,p.4). The U.S government also utilizes “extradition request” (formal surrender of a person by a state to another state for prosecution) as a judicial tool regularly used to force “suspected drug traffickers located abroad” to face trial (Rosen, 2015,p.27).

Institutional Framework at the Regional Level

In 2007, the Ministerial Conference of the African Union (AU) in a continental response to drug trafficking drew up a revised AU Plan of Action on Drug Control and Crime Prevention (2007–2012) aimed at addressing “illicit drugs and how they could be controlled” which was ratified and also adopted by the AU Heads of State meeting that was held in Addis Ababa in 2008 (Ayodele, 2011,p.47). The African Union Commission (AUC) have continually played its part in collaboration with UNODC to support the development of the African Union (AU) Plan of Action on Drug Control 2013-2017. The AU Plan of Action for 2013-17 took a step further to recognize emerging issues like the increasing level of drug consumption aside from the region being noted as a transit point. The Plan of action explores relationship between drug trafficking and other issues like “armed conflict and insecurity, and democratization and governance” (Institute for Security Studies, 2013, p.10). The Plan of Action also aims to “move away from just law enforcement training, but to look at the skills and capacities that will be required to have an impact- data collection and analysis” (Institute for Security Studies, 2013, p.11).

Other strategic framework of the African Union Plan of Action on Drug Control and Crime Prevention for the period 2013-2017 aims at shaping drug-related policy development according to (Council of the European Union,2015,p.24) and include the “adoption of measures to allocate the confiscated proceeds from drug trafficking and related offences to demand reduction and treatment programmes....stepping up research on drug control and the monitoring and evaluation of drug abuse and trafficking trends; and ..facilitating continent-wide training for the treatment of drug addiction”(WACD,2014, p.16). It also “encourages AU member states to ensure that policies reflect the importance of human rights and public health in drug control” (WACD, 2014, p.16). AU member states were also “tasked to complete the Global Mapping of Treatment Capacity tool that aims at identifying technical assistance gaps.

Institutional Framework at the Sub-regional Level

The Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) having also acknowledged drug trafficking to be a major threat to regional security has embarked upon several policies aimed at combating the drug trade and in its commitment to uphold to international norms and standards with regards to combating the drug trade have in the last two decades adopted several measures. As cited in literature (UNODC, 2017;Aning, and Pokoo, 2014; Shehu, 2009), these policies, resolutions, protocols, convention, decisions, declarations and joint initiatives are listed as follows:

1. ECOWAS Convention A/P1/7/92 on Mutual Assistance in Criminal Matters.

2. ECOWAS Convention A/P1/8/94 on Extradition.
3. ECOWAS 1998 declaration titled: "Community Flame Ceremony-the Fight against Drugs" by ECOWAS Heads of State and Government, at its 21st Summit on 30-31 October 1998 in Abuja.
4. Resolution A/RES.2/8/97 relating to Prevention and Control of Drug Abuse in West Africa; Recommendation C/98 on the establishment of a Regional Fund for Financing of Drug Control activities in West Africa.
5. Decision A/DEC.8/10/98 on the establishment of a Regional Fund for Financing of Drug Control activities.
6. The 1999 Protocol relating to the Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management, Resolution, Peacekeeping and Security.
7. Decision A/DEC.9/12/99 establishing the Inter-Governmental Action Group against Money Laundering in West Africa (GIABA).
8. Protocol on Corruption of 2001.
9. Protocol on the Establishment of a regional Criminal Intelligence and Investigation Bureau of 2005.
10. ECOWAS Convention on Small Arms of 2006.
11. ECOWAS 2008 approval of a Regional Framework and Action Plan on Combating Drugs and Organized Crime in West Africa in December 2008] PG 1 OF PM-3.
12. 2008 Political Declaration - the Abuja Declaration - and a Regional Action Plan to address the security threats posed by drug trafficking in the sub-region resulting from ECOWAS Ministerial Conference in Praia, Cape Verde, in 2008.
13. The ECOWAS Operational Plan, elaborated in Abuja on 12-13 May 2009, endorsed by the Heads of State and Government at their 36th Ordinary Summit in Abuja on 22 June 2009 which provides for concrete, budgeted activities aimed at building the ECOWAS Commission's coordination capacities and at addressing specific priorities linked to the drug and crime situation.
14. Establishment of the Commission for Gender and Child Development, Youth/Sports, Civil Society, Employment and Drug Control which in 2012 focused on the development of policies and action plans, including the implementation of concrete programs on drug control.
15. ECOWAS Counter-Terrorism Strategy and Implementation Plan adopted in February 2013 and the ECOWAS Maritime Security Strategy.
16. ECOWAS and the EU Delegation in March 2013 in Abuja finalized and agreed on a new framework agreement entitled "EU Support to the Implementation of the ECOWAS Drug and Crime Action.

Other Regional Joint Initiative also includes:

1. Adoption of West African Joint Operations initiative (WAJO).
2. ECOWAS adoption of the Dakar Initiative in February 2010 signed by seven countries in the region.
3. Implementation of the West Africa Coast Initiative (WACI) and the establish transnational crime units (TCUs).
4. Development of National Integrated Programmes (NIPs) for all the ECOWAS countries. Establishment of Financial Intelligence Centers at the national level to combat financial fraud.
5. Facilitating bilateral agreements with certain countries such as the United States and the United Kingdom in the areas of training, logistical support and extradition protocols.
6. Airport Control Project (Aircop) launched in January 2010.
7. Container Control Programme (CCP) The Programme became Operational in 2006.
8. Operation "Atakora" Launched in 2012.
9. INCB's Ephedrine Pseudoephedrine Intelligence (EPIG) Initiative.

ECOWAS encouraged and signed several bilateral agreements with European and American partners as well UNODC in forging strong ties with counter-narcotic law enforcement agencies in the region (Gberie, 2015, p.4). According to the Center on International Cooperation, policy measures in the West African region "boast a top-down, multi-layered architecture for responding to drug trafficking and organized crime, covering regional, national and local levels" (Center on International Cooperation, 2012, p.4). GIABA, a French acronym standing for *Le Groupe Intergouvernemental d'Action contre le Blanchiment d'Argent en Afrique de l'Ouest*, in English (Inter-Governmental Group against Money Laundering in West Africa) and popularly known by its acronym (GIABA) is a specialized institution of ECOWAS which was established

in 2000 with headquarters in Dakar, Senegal and remains the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) Style Regional Body (FSRB) of the sub-region that is committed to the implementation of the FATF Recommendations against Money Laundering, Terrorist and Proliferation Financing as noted in FATF (2019) which set out the essential measures that countries should have in place as follows:

1. identify the risks, and develop policies and domestic coordination
2. pursue money laundering, terrorist financing and the financing of proliferation
3. apply preventive measures for the financial sector and other designated sectors
4. establish powers and responsibilities for the competent authorities (e.g., investigative, law enforcement and supervisory authorities) and other institutional measures
5. enhance the transparency and availability of beneficial ownership information of legal persons and arrangements; and v facilitate international cooperation.

The activities of (GIABA) has been improved by ECOWAS, however this is mostly limited to “monitoring the implementation of anti-money laundering regimes at a country level” (Ralston, 2014, p.17). Technical assistance is also being provided by UNODC to various ECOWAS Member States through its Global Program against Money Laundering (GPML). The completion of a report on “seizure, confiscation and management of proceeds of crime” by UNODC/GPML in the West Africa sub-region led to the “establishment of a regional network on asset forfeiture” UNODC, 2014, p.5). Mechanism such as the International Financial Action Task Force (FATF) are also complementary efforts that has led to the establishment of Financial Intelligence Centers (FIC) aimed at combating fraud at the national levels across Africa. This has resulted in the establishment of relevant courts to tackle money laundering and financial crimes in most states in West Africa. Bilateral agreements mostly from USA, Britain, and some countries in the European Union are entered with West African states most especially in the areas of extradition protocols, logistics and training to enhance the efficiency and capacity of law enforcement agents (Aning & Pokoo, 2014, p.8).

ECOWAS Member States with the support of UNODC in 2011 also established the “West African Network of Central Authorities and Prosecutors (WACAP).” which aimed at bringing “prosecutors and central authorities” together in order to “exchange ideas, experiences and best practices and participate in joint trainings” (UNODC, 2014, p.4). The establishment of the Asset Recovery Inter-Agency Network for West Africa (ARIN-WA) with UNODC support in March 2014 and November 2014. (ARIN-WA) also provides that its members “supports asset recovery training, promotes the exchange of best practices and facilitates requests for operational cooperation” (Council of the European Union, 2015, p.30).

Other range of “policy and operational responses” that is linked to anti-drug trafficking mechanisms that has been initiated by West African governments through the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and the African Union (AU) include the ECOWAS Counter-Terrorism Strategy adopted in February 2013 and the finalization of the ECOWAS Integrated Maritime Security Strategy in November 2013 (Gberie, 2015, p.4; WACD, 2014, p.16). In late 2014, ECOWAS also established the West African Epidemiology Network on Drug Use (WENDU) which aims at “building on existing inadequate drug treatment and seizure data, aims to collect information on drug use patterns and establish new monitoring mechanisms to ultimately better inform policymakers on drug user treatment options” (Gberie 2015, p.4).

The West Africa Commission on Drugs however was set up in 2013 by the Kofi Annan foundation and made up of “12 African personalities, from the worlds of politics, civil society, health, security and the judiciary” with mandate to “analyse the problems of drug trafficking and use in order to deliver an authoritative report and comprehensive policy recommendations” (EMCDDA, 2014). The commission’s three major objectives include “mobilising public awareness and political commitment, developing evidence-based policy recommendations and developing local and regional capacities and ownership” (EMCDDA, 2014, p.17).

The ECOWAS regional action plan also motivated the Dakar Initiative (Ministerial Conference on Drugs held in 2011 in Dakar) which is a sub-regional initiative sponsored by Spain, UNODC and ECOWAS and was attended by representatives from Guinea-Bissau, Guinea, the Gambia, Mali, Cape Verde and Senegal. It also gave momentum to other “national, bilateral and sub-regional initiatives” such as “West African Coast Initiative (WACI), implemented by UNODC, the United Nations Office for West Africa (UNOWA) and INTERPOL, and the UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) programme in five countries: Ivory Coast, Liberia, Sierra Leone, Guinea Bissau and Guinea” (EMCDDA, 2014,17).

The ECOWAS Regional Action Plan was also extended through a memorandum by the ECOWAS Commission in February 2013 for two years (2013-15) and endorsed at the 42nd ordinary session of the Heads of State in order to help ECOWAS Commission “undertake the operational review of the implementation, and re-validate the ECOWAS Regional Action Plan on Illicit Drug Trafficking, Organized Crime related to it and Drug Abuse in West Africa”. UNODC (2014:6) and also consolidate the financial support base for its effective implementation (EMCDDA, 2014, p.17).

A partnership agreement between UNODC, INTERPOL and the World Custom Organization (WCO) created joint task forces mainly in eight strategic airports mainly used by drug traffickers within the West African region. Likewise a project dubbed “AIRCOP” also have created and improved “real-time communication system between the airports to report arrests and potential suspects” (Ralston, 2014, p.17). The aim of the AIRCOP project is to “strengthen drug interception capabilities at specific international airports in Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean” (Council of the European Union, 2015,p.26). From 2011 to 2014 training have been provided under the AIRCOP program to a total number of 461 officers (Council of the European Union, 2015,p.27).

Training workshops meant to strengthen “capabilities of West African countries in the collection and analysis of data” have been held in several West African countries by UNODC. UNODC has also helped to improve participation rates and contributions of ECOWAS states to “UN Survey on Crime Trends and the Operations of Criminal Justice Systems and to the annual reports questionnaire, by developing a standard template for drug seizures” which resulted in 17 countries in Central African and West African sending “their data on drug seizures and arrests of traffickers” in 2014 to UNODC(Council of the European Union, 2015, p.31).

Lastly while there exist policies , instruments , programs , security sector reforms and intervention measures used in combating drug trafficking and insecurity in ECOWAS community and member states of the community generally, the strengthening capacity for inter - institutional coordination most especially at national level remains a critical focal point in areas that include “joint regional and global initiatives such as the UNODC West African Coast Initiative, the UNODC-WCO (World Customs Organization) Global Container Control Program,(GCCP) the UNODC-WCO-INTERPOL Airport Communication Program (AIRCOP)” (Council of the European Union, 2015,p.31).

Comparative Analysis of Institutional Framework at the National Level

At the national level, Guinea- Bissau, Guinea- Conakry and Nigeria have one way or the other contributed to policies , instruments, programs, security sector reforms and intervention measures used in combating drug trafficking and insecurity. In June 2008, the authorities of EU and the Guinea-Bissau launched the Security Sector Reform (SSR) Mission “endowed with no executive powers, and lacking resources, the mission was terminated two years after”(Strazzari, 2014,p.15). This was also reported by (Klein, 2014) who asserted that Guinea-Bissau benefitted from such development funding by the European Commission “with €7.6 million for security sector reform and €2 million to set up a drug control unit (assistance has been suspended)” (pp.7-8).

Among the states under study, Guinea-Bissau is the most significant narcotics trafficking hub where government officials at all levels are complicit in drug trafficking. The country has the least developed institutional framework for combating drug trafficking and relies mostly on existing law enforcement agencies i.e the Judicial Police and the Justice Sector as well as elements of the military doing that job. But

due to inadequate resources and professionalism, complicity of law enforcement and judicial officers in drug trafficking, and lack of effective civilian oversight, Guinea - Bissau does not have a functional institutional framework for combating drug trafficking. In an effort by the Guinea-Bissau government to combat drug trafficking, it adopted in July 2007 an emergency plan to combat drug trafficking and organized crime; it also ratified the UN convention against transnational organized crime and the UN convention against corruption. (Peacebuilding Commission,2008),

The UN Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) and the UN Integrated Peace-Building Office in Guinea-Bissau (UNIOGBIS) in recognition of Guinea - Bissau law enforcement inadequacies especially with regards to combating drug trafficking also initiated a Security Sector Reform (SSR) programme which is in progress to tackle the inadequacies. A U.S.-funded Regional Law Enforcement Advisor have also developed a training strategy and coordinated U.S. assistance to Guinea-Bissau's law enforcement agencies (INCSR, 2013). The government is presently reforming the country's security services, which also include those responsible for counter narcotics enforcement.

The situation in Guinea - Conakry is a little different. Apart from specialized police anti-drug unit that existed for decades and specifically dedicated to counter-narcotics, the country in the early days of drug trafficking did not have a national counter-drug strategy or other counter-drug initiatives (Public Library of US Diplomacy, 2007), not until a secretariat designed to combat drugs and organized crime was created in 2008 by the government of Guinea and the Central Anti-drug Office (OCA) placed under it. Shortly after President Alpha Condé was elected in December 2010 and in order to prioritize drug trafficking counter narcotics effort, he attached the anti- drug department with headquarters in Conakry directly to the presidency. This agency comprises of 230 officials, which include gendarmerie and the police across the whole country and also in the borders with Guinea-Bissau, Senegal, Mali and Sierra Leone (Council of the European Union, 2013, p.41). In spite of Guinea - Bissau and Guinea - Conakry being two neighbouring countries, they are yet to have effective bilateral cooperation aimed at combating the illegal drug trade .Narcotics control efforts in the two countries have equally well suffered considerably over the years (INCSR, 2013).

In contrast to the Guinea - Bissau and Guinea -Conakry, Nigeria has a long history of combating drug trafficking. It also has an improved institutional framework for combating drug trafficking compared to the other two countries. In a concerted effort in narcotics control strategy, National Drug Law Enforcement Agency (NDLEA) was created in 1989 (Udama 2013, p.1). The National Drug Law Enforcement Agency Act of 1989 is the pioneer legislation against drugs and money laundering with Section 13 of the Act criminalizing the trafficking of drugs and money laundering. Sections of the Act also made provision for the forfeiture of the property of persons that are convicted of drug offences. The NDLEA is also empowered by section 33 "to freeze bank accounts containing suspected proceeds of illicit drug trafficking" following approval from the Attorney General of the Federation. Section 24 also empowers the agency to "seize and keep in custody both moveable and immovable property that represents proceeds from drugs, or is connected with an offence relating to illicit drugs, trafficking in narcotic drugs, or money laundering" (Ayodele,2011,p.44).

The NDLEA is saddled with the responsibilities of enforcing laws against drug trafficking and abuse and plays the lead role in demand reduction and drug control policy development. The NDLEA has continued to foster collaboration with diverse agencies in enhancing their operational efficiencies. For example a memorandum of understanding in 2012 was signed between the NDLEA and the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) to establish a vetted unit of 14 officers who were expected to exclusively work with DEA in combating drug trafficking. Through collaborative effort, the NDLEA benefits from U.S. which provides technology and training. Nigeria also abides by the 1931 U.S.-United Kingdom Extradition Treaty, made applicable to Nigeria in 1935, which remains the legal basis for U.S. extradition requests (INCSR, 2013).

Nigeria have also benefitted from the developmental program initiated by the European Commission. This includes the financing agreement in 2012 of the largest national program signed between the European Commission and Nigeria with set of interventions that cost the Commission €36 million to support the fight against drugs trafficking and organized crime (Klein,2014,p.8). Apart from this, Nigeria have also benefitted from other countries like the United States and several other development partners. Another program that Nigeria has benefited from the regional level include the “Cocaine Route Program” (Klein, 2014,p.8). United States of America, the United Kingdom, Northern Ireland and Germany have also contributed in one way or the other in providing capacity-building support and training courses for NDLEA(UNODC,2014,p.8) .One of such assistance was reported by the Council of European Commission as follows:

At the end of 2012, Nigeria received almost USD 120 million from the European Union to finance three major national projects on the fight against drugs and related organised crime. This financial support enabled the Nigerian Interministerial Drug Control Committee to draw up the National Drug Control Master Plan for the period 2015-2019, which provides a roadmap for everyone working to reduce drug supply and demand(Council of the European Union, 2015, p.14).

Also the Rotary club, Lion club and Lioness clubs and the International Federation of Female Lawyers are examples of non-governmental organizations that have been actively involved in educational programmes aimed at providing the public with information about the drug trade. The CLEEN Foundation, also a non-governmental organization that aims to promote public safety, security and accessible justice in Nigeria in collaboration with the Nigeria Drug Law Enforcement Agency (NDLEA) have also through its Youth and Policing programme, carried out anti-drugs project like “drug-free clubs” (Okenyodo, 2012,p.2).

Conclusion and Recommendations

There exist conventions, policies, instruments, programs, security sector reforms, and intervention measures meant for combating drug trafficking and insecurity in ECOWAS community and member states of the community generally and particularly in the states under comparison (Guinea-Bissau, Guinea-Conakry and Nigeria), however most of them were found to have been derived from external rather than domestic efforts. Thus partly explains why their implementation or domestication processes involving the policies, instruments and programs within the domain at the national level remain either slow or ineffective in majority of the cases.

Impact of policy measures were however found to have been felt more in Nigeria compared to Guinea-Bissau and Guinea-Conakry. The following recommendations are therefore made:

1. The government of Guinea-Bissau, Guinea-Conakry and Nigeria respectively must focus on the adoption of a holistic and all-encompassing strategy that is multi-sectorial and multi-dimensional in nature. Such strategy should be based on a sound understanding of the driving factors that led to the emergence of the region as a drug trafficking hub and its rising trend within the last one and half decade and take necessary steps to address them.
2. Heads of government should adopt a procedural approach towards domesticating counter-narcotic drug policies, instruments and programs which should consider local realities most especially in the resilience communities along the trafficking routes in order to ensure that policy measures are functional, effective and efficient across states. Compliance to policy measures taken should also be monitored through periodic assessment procedures adhered to by member states of ECOWAS.
3. ECOWAS states and particularly the states under comparison must adequately fund counter-narcotic programs, improve cross- border cooperation and the harmonization of drug policy laws to enable uniformity in sanctions in order to ensure that drug traffickers do not have the opportunity to settle in states considered as not having strict drug policy laws that can curb and frustrate their operational efficiency. With same laws and sanctions in place, drug traffickers will no doubt find it very difficult

to move to other areas with lesser sanctions. Such drug legislation should also take cognizance of the emergence of West Africa as a production zone for methamphetamine drugs.

4. National legislation on drug laws in case study states should also align with international convention while ensuring that the rule of law is followed. The legal framework put in place by the criminal justice system across states in the West African sub-region and particularly in the states under comparative analysis must also facilitate interdiction actions, arrest procedures and the successful prosecution of drug traffickers. They should also ensure that sustainable supply reduction policies that focus on interdiction strategies and harm reduction policies that address public health and developmental challenges must be jointly embarked upon and given the required attention and funding.
5. States under comparison should realize that the issues surrounding the drug trade are multifaceted and requires a coordinated response and integrated approach to address. The capacity of inter-institutional agencies that are directly involved in counter-narcotic strategies and policies at the national level of West African states therefore should be expanded in scope and strengthened with a coordinating authority appointed and saddled with the responsibility of providing the much needed springboard for jointly collaborating with regional and global partners such as UNODC, AU, ECOWAS, INTERPOL, EUROPEAN UNION and other countries and organization across the globe that have been providing technical support and funding for counter-narcotic efforts. This will bring about cohesion in policy harmonization between ECOWAS states and regional and global partners.
6. ECOWAS Commission and member states should realize that public and private non-governmental organization are crucial allies in the war against drug trafficking and therefore should form partnership with them and incorporate them into any strategic and implementation plan that aims at curbing the drug trade. This will enhance the level of corporation required between government, NGOs and development partners in developing a response strategy for the resilience local community members.
7. The role that public perception plays in curbing the drug trafficking trends should not be set aside as it forms a strong basis for making intervention measures effective. Therefore states must integrate indigenous views about the various associated problems of drug trafficking and its destabilizing effects on the West African sub-region. These views will help to localize intervention strategies aimed at complementing internationally-derived intervention measures. This approach will no doubt create a much desired participatory and supportive atmosphere from the local communities, the governmental authorities of states in the West African sub-region and foreign developmental partners on the way forward.

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