FOR PRESS CONSIDERATION

ECOWAS POST VISION 2020 NATIONAL CONSULTATION

BACKGROUND

ECOWAS was established in May 1975 through the Treaty of Lagos with the original intents such as economic initiatives, which would foster economic and political cooperation among Member States with the objective to improve the living conditions of its people and, at the same time, ensure economic growth and development through integration of the Member States.

However, over the years, the region continued to be confronted with many unfavorable challenges to achieving its objective, and as such, ECOWAS needed to adopt strategies that would keep the organization on track in respect to integration of the region at all fronts, bearing in mind the possible negative impact these challenges could have on its efforts for uplifting the standard of living for its people.

Cognizant of the fact that such ambitious objective can only become a reality and meaningful, with the political commitment by the Authority of Heads of State and Government of ECOWAS, the ECOWAS Vision 2020 was adopted in June 2007 as the vehicle to transform West Africa into a borderless, peaceful and prosperous region by 2020.

All these years, this vision has provided the strategic orientation for the design and implementation of policies, programs, projects and activities of the regional body in their pursue achieving the peaceful, borderless and prosperous region.

Now the year 2020 deadline set in and considering the many persistent challenges including competing priorities that have overwhelmed ECOWAS in the past and are still visible today, the biggest question now is: was vision 2020 really achievable in the wake of multiple conflicts that over-showed and undermined ECOWAS' ability to effectively and efficiently deliver what should have been done, that was not done at all in the face of these serious economic and political challenges?

A concrete efforts aimed at creating a borderless, peaceful, prosperous and coherent region, built on good governance, where people can access and exploit its enormous resources through the creation of opportunities for sustainable development and environmental preservation, will be key to any new transformation agenda that will be developed for region with the overall objective of positively impacting the lives of its citizens including non-restrictions of the movement of people and goods across borders.

Cognizant of this, the Authority of Heads of State and Government of ECOWAS reached a consensus that urgent strategies and programs must be developed and implemented to respond effectively to the needs of West Africans in the development of the region. Consequently, a Roadmap has been established for the development next Vision Agenda of ECOWAS with a
flagship activities, such as the conducts of National Stakeholders Consultations in all Member States. The consultations is to ensure that the post-2020 Vision reflects the "needs and aspirations" of the citizenry. This consultation will bring the people together in a "Focus Group Discussions" (FGDs) forum to gather their views, experiences, opinions and share ideas on three fundamental areas: Achievements of ECOWAS during the implementation of the ECOWAS VISION 2020; New development challenges in the region that need to be addressed in the post-2020 Vision blueprint; and Long term aspirations for the Region in terms of the "West Africa they want to see" in the next 25 to 50 years.

OBJECTIVES

The objective of this consultation is to engaged the community citizen on the their views and opinions on the performance of the ECOWAS, and in specific to exchange views on what could be the next vision of the Regio in the next years to come as enshrined by the founding principles of the Organization.

Specifically, the objective of the national Consultation are to:

- Collecting the perception of the people on the process of regional integration and the contribution of ECOWAS for the benefit of the population and the sub-regional development
- Collecting what are the most successful accomplishments of the region during the period of implementation of the ECOWAS Vision 2020
- Collecting the views of the community Citizens on the emerging challenges in the region that still need to be address in the Post Vision 2020.

AREAS OF INTEREST

The Economic Community of West African States is working in all the areas of development for the effective integration objective of the region to be achieved and given that the National Consultations is to consider the broader areas which include eight key thematic areas, including economy, social structures, governance, peace and security, environment, technological innovations and cross-border challenges, and infrastructural issues which are deemed vital to West Africa efforts for integration.

EXPECTED OUTPUT

The National consultations is focusing getting the view and expectation of all stakeholders in the implementation of ECOWAS Vision 2020 blueprint and what would the most possible areas of focus for the region in the next 2550 years. Given these, the expected outcome of these consultations is

a. Document the view of the stakeholders on the implementation integration programs as encapsulated in the vision 2020
b. To document the views of the citizens on what emerging issues to be factored in Post Vision 2020 of ECOWAS.