

## **IMPACT OF ECOWAS PROTOCOLS ON POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC INTEGRATION OF THE WEST AFRICAN SUB-REGION**

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**Abstract:** *This paper analysed the impact of the ECOWAS protocols and programmes on political and economic integration of West African sub-region. The desk review method was adopted in this paper, while information contained therein were obtained from relevant literatures'. The paper evaluated the implementation of the various protocols and programmes that constitute the main integrative instruments of ECOWAS from 1975 – 2007. These include protocols and programmes relating to free movement of persons, trade liberalization, monetary cooperation, transport, telecommunication, conflict resolution, energy and power and ECOWAS Court of Justice. The paper observed that although the necessary structures have been put in place, ECOWAS is yet to achieve complete implementation in some of the main integrative instruments. It was also observed that some of the programmes have negative impacts on the sub-region. The partial implementation achieved in free movement of persons and goods is not yielding expected benefits due to lack of political will and administrative bottleneck in implementing the various protocols and programmes placed by member-states. In spite of these shortcomings, ECOWAS has made some remarkable progress in its drive to regional integrations. The paper recommends among others that ECOWAS should source for fund internally by ensuring that member-nations pay their dues. ECOWAS leaders should practice good and transparent governance in their countries to reduce occurrences of conflicts in the region.*

**Keywords:** Development, Economic integration, Political integration, Security, ECOWAS institutions.

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### **INTRODUCTION**

People come together to form communities on the basis of parameters such as common language and culture due to the need for security and self-preservation. This need for security and self preservation makes communities to integrate and nations to emerge (Thomas, 2010). The current global trend is for groups of contiguous nations to pull their resources together under a regional cooperation for the well being of their citizens. This is what is generally referred to as integration. Charmely (1977) is of the opinion that integration relates to any process leading to the formation of a political and economic whole or organized unit.

Political and economic integration involves the process whereby states agree to forgo the ability to formulate policies independently on matters concerning trade, custom tariffs, immigration and international trade among others, seeking instead to delegate the decision making process to a new central organ. The aim of political and economic integration is to promote economic advancement of member-states and the overall development of the region or sub-region.

Regional bodies such as Southern African Development Coordination Conference (SADCC) now called Southern African Development Community (SADC) was created in 1980. It was

borne out of the determination of the oppressed people of Southern Africa to liberate themselves totally from British and Portuguese colonialism and from apartheid regimes in Southern Africa (Mwale, 1997). The Northern America Free Trade Area (NEFTA) emerged as a result of the need for economic pact among countries such as Canada, Mexico and the United State of America.

The European Coal and Steel Company (ECSC) was similarly established in a treaty signed in Paris on 18 April, 1951 by Belgium, France, Germany, Italy, Luxemburg and Netherlands to pull their coal steel productions together for economic gain. It was seen as a first step towards a united Europe. In the same vein, European Economic Community (EEC) now called European Union (EU) was established on 25 March, 1957 to create a common market and and harmonized economic policies. It has 25 members and has become a model for other attempts at regional integration throughout the world (Europe World Year Book, 2000).

In west African sub-region, the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) was established on 28 May, 1975. The 15 West African States that constitute ECOWAS are the Republic of Benin, Burkina Faso, the Republic of Cabo Verde, the Republic of Cote D' Ivoire, the Republic of Gambia, the Republic of Ghana, the Republic of Guinea, the Republic of Guinea Bissau, the Republic Liberia, the Republic of Mali, the Republic of Niger, the Federal Republic of Nigeria, the Republic of Senegal, the Republic of Sierra Leone and Togolese Republic. The objectives of ECOWAS include promoting cooperation in economic, social and cultural activities. The ECOWAS is made up of four institutions, namely: the Commission, the Community parliament, the Community Court of Justice and ECOWAS Bank for Investment and Development (EBID). The ECOWAS Commission and the ECOWAS Bank for Investment and Development more often called "the Fund" are the two main institutions designated to implement policies, pursue a number of programmes and convey development projects in member-states. Impact as a concept used in this paper implies the impression or the implication of ECOWAS protocols on political and economic development of West African sub-region, which can be negative or positive.

ECOWAS has been in existence for thirty eight (38) years with little noticeable indices of integration in the sub-region. While EU citizens move freely and transact business across national boundaries with common currency with ease, movement of ECOWAS citizens within the sub-region is still restricted. Many scholars have written on the ECOWAS protocols and programmes in recent times, but no critical assessment have been carried out on the impact of the vital protocols and programmes of the union on the sub-region. This paper is therefore informed by the desire to assess the extent to which the implementations of the essential ECOWAS protocols have achieved the set objectives and the possible impact on the West African sub-region, this will be achieved through the following objectives:

- a. To explore the concept of political and economic integration and the linkage between integration and development.
- b. To examine the political and economic integration of ECOWAS.
- c. To evaluate the constraints or challenges militating against integration process in the West African Sub-region.
- d. To propose some strategies for overcoming these challenges.

## SCOPE OF THE PAPER

This paper is limited to the analysis of ECOWAS performance in the implementation of its various programmes on political and economic integration from November 1976 to July 2007. The paper covers only the protocols and programmes on the main integrative instruments such as free movement of persons, right of residence and establishment, trade liberalization, monetary cooperation, transport, telecommunication, energy and power. Others are protocols relating to Mechanism for Conflict prevention, Management and Resolution, Peacemaking and Security and ECOWAS Court of Justice as well as constraints militating against the realization of the ECOWAS goals. Finally, some recommendations will be made and conclusion drawn. The methodology adopted in this paper is the desk research method. The presenter reviewed literatures (e.g. textbooks, journals, ECOWAS special reports and seminar papers) that are relevant to the paper.

## INTEGRATION

Integration has a multi-dimensional perspective. Two representative perceptions are presented. Ojo *et al* (1985) perceived integration as the situation whereby two or more individuals or groups come in contact with each other to relate primarily for cooperation, supportive of other positive reasons. Doherty and Pfalzgraff (Jnr) (1997) referred to integration as a process whereby political actors in several distinct national settings are persuaded to shift their loyalties, expectations and political activities towards a new centre whose instructions demand jurisdiction over the pre-existing national states.

Charmely (1977) observed that unilateralism and the attendant protection of national sovereignty are incompatible with regional integration which requires consensus among member-states in the decision-making process and the surrender of part of national sovereignty to the new community in policy formulation. This is so because unilateralism guards national sovereignty while regionalism requires all member-states to make binding commitment to the promotion of free trade and provide adjudication for trade dispute arising from unilateral disregard for trade liberalization.

The implication of this submission is that when countries experience regionalism, national sovereignty is undermined to an extent related to the level of economic integration. Therefore, the process of integration entails liberalization of trade in goods and services. There is a link between integration and development. This is exemplified by the success story of the EU which as noted by Gowon (2001) has stimulated similar experiments of regionalism in Africa and other regions of the world. In North Africa, there is the Arab Maghreb Union (AMU), East and Southern Africa and there is also the ECOWAS.

In recognition of the fact that integration leads to development, the African Union Summit in Abuja in 1991 undertook to establish an African Common market to be based on the integration of the five sub-regions: West, North, South, East and Central Africa (Thomas, 2010). The market is being developed by the regional communities ECOWAS, AMU and SADC. There is the Common Market for East and Southern Africa (COMESA) and Preferential Trade Areas (PTA) and Economic Community for Central African States (ECCA/CEEAS) respectively (Gowon, 2001). The concept of regional economic integration is now a global strategy for development and is applied by the developed nations of Europe and America. This paper therefore adopts the concept of integration as a range of inter-relationship between nation states within a region or sub-region trying to promote their

economic and political interests through the synergy of members' efforts and resources including the harmonization and coordination of economic and political policies.

### **Economic Integration**

Onwuka (1985) is of the opinion that economic integration is a complex phenomenon that results from integration and mutual strengthening of transnational trade and finance of inter-governmental and non-governmental international organizations and of trans-national values and international law. The concept of economic integration adopted in this paper is where member-states share commonality and harmonized laws and regulations in free trade area, custom union, common market, economic policies and union, which could further include political union.

### **Political Integration**

Integration relates to any process leading to the formation of a political and economic whole or organized unit (Charmely, 1977). The existing regions of the world showed that the purpose of integration is the development of economies to the mutual benefit of the members. Political integration exists when member-states agree to surrender their individual legislative power to a supra-national planning authority (Charmely, 1977). Sometimes, economic integration leads to the political integration of the member-states as the EU is heading to. Political integration exists when all the legislative authorities backing the integration are in themselves unified. It introduces citizenship, increase inter-governmental cooperation in economic and monetary affairs and establishes common justice and home affair (Charmely, 1977).

Abok (1995) observes that the most successful political and economic integration today is the EU which has Common Monetary union, Central bank, single currency, parliament and Court of Justice for the arbitration on certain aspect of member-countries. They also have unified foreign policies and other relevant institutions and also maintain diplomatic relations in its own right with over one hundred and seventy countries and international organization at ambassadorial level all over the world. It is evident that nations benefit from regional integration in terms of development and it is expected that the case of ECOWAS will not be different.

### **Integration and Development**

Europe World Year Book (2000) view development as a visible manifestation of improvement in income, wealth and modernization. It is the presence of social, economic and political policies, which increase the quality of life. It further states that the level of development can be appraised from the availability of infrastructure in a community, society or nation and these infrastructure include roads, rail, power generation, communication, education, health, housing, portable water and level of technological advancement. This is because technological advancement determines the pace of national development and is generally one of the important indices for social development.

Economic integration leads to enlarged market, which ensures economies of scale and hence competitive position. Joint community projects will certainly help address the peculiar problems of agriculture, manufacturing and infrastructural decay. It is clear that integration facilitates foreign investment, expand local production and economy of scales which fast-track economic and social development (ECOWAS, 2000).

In ECOWAS, the nexus of integration and development are apparent in the present quest for liberalized economic policies which is a catalyst for the overall development of the sub-region. In order to achieve the set objectives, regional bodies established instruments and institutions to guide and administer the member-states. This paper therefore examines the instruments and institutions for ECOWAS political and economic integration.

## ECOWAS INSTITUTIONS

The process of integration necessitates the creation of suitable institutions to deal with the complex problem of linking the political and economy of several nations. Indeed, the success of the EU is attributable to the wide range of institutions which have been instrumental in translating its programmes and policies into reality. The Lagos Treaty recognises the development of adequate instrumental machinery as an essential condition for successful coordination of ECOWAS development policies. The essential programmes that ECOWAS put in place to achieve political and economic integration covered by this paper include: Free movement of persons, Right of residence and establishment, transport and Telecommunication. Others are Trade liberalization, Monetary cooperation, Conflict resolution, Energy and power and ECOWAS Court of Justice.

### Free Movement of Persons, Right of Residence and Establishment

Article 2 of ECOWAS protocol states that “Community citizens have the right to enter, reside and establish in the territory of member-states.” It gave a maximum transitional period of fifteen years to abolish all obstacles to free movement of persons and the right of residence and establishment. The programme was to be achieved in 3 phases:

- a. Phase I- Right of entry and Abolition of visa.
- b. Phase II - Right of Residence.
- c. Phase III - Right of Establishment (ECOWAS, 2003).

A study of member-states’ performances in priority programmes and status of implementations in the past thirteen years as shown on Table1 showed that only 47% of member-states have introduced ECOWAS Travel Certificate while only 66.7% have harmonized immigration/ emigration forms, 86% have introduced the ECOWAS Brown Card, which facilitates the movement of vehicles of ECOWAS citizens across borders. With this haphazard and partial implementation there has not been free flow of labour and capital among member-nations which is essential for economic integration.

**TABLE 1. ECOWAS MEMBER-NATION IMPLEMENTATION PROTOCOL ON FREE MOVEMENT OF PERSONS**

Serial	Country	Abolition of Visa and Entry Permit	Introduction of ECOWAS Travel Certificate	Introduction of Harmonized Immigration/E migration Forms	Introduction of ECOWAS Brown Card Scheme
(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)	(e)	(f)
1.	BENIN	YES	NO	YES	YES
2.	BURKINA FASO	YES	YES	YES	YES
3.	CAPE VERDE	YES	NO	NO	As an Island nation Cape Verde is not affected
4.	COTE D’ IVOIRE	YES	NO	NO	YES

5.	GAMBIA	YES	YES	NO	NO
6.	GHANA	YES	YES	YES	YES
7.	GUINEA	YES	YES	YES	YES
8.	GUINEA BISSAU	YES	NO	NO	YES
9.	LIBERIA	YES	NO	NO	NO
10.	MALI	YES	NO	YES	YES
11.	NIGER	YES	YES	YES	YES
12.	NIGERIA	YES	YES	YES	YES
13.	SENEGAL	YES	NO	YES	YES
14.	SIERRA LEONE	YES	YES	YES	YES
15.	TOGO	YES	NO	NO	YES
		<b>100%</b>	<b>47%</b>	<b>66.7%</b>	<b>86%</b>

**Source:** ECOWAS Silver Jubilee Anniversary Achievements and Prospects 1975 – 2000.

In order to ease the movement of its citizens, ECOWAS introduced a common sub-regional passport in May 2000. Member-states have been very slow in the implementation of the ECOWAS passport as only the Republic of Benin, Senegal and recently Nigeria have introduced the programme. Many member-states still retain roadblocks along trans-national highways. There is therefore undue harassment of ECOWAS citizens by security agents at the various check points. The free movement of ECOWAS citizens across national borders and the right of residence has encouraged trans-border crime within the region. This negative impact of the protocol is becoming much worrisome in the sub-region in recent time.

### **Transportation**

The two trans-West African highway networks proposed in the 1970s have been completed. However, physical barriers such as road blocks must be completely removed to ensure free flow of traffic and elimination of harassment. The other transportation aspects of ECOWAS are as follows:

**ECOWAS Railways:** ECOWAS Secretariat has obtained a grant of US 3.31 million dollars from the African Development bank to conduct engineering and feasibility studies (ECOWAS, 1993a). Meanwhile, a Study Support Team (Steering Committee) for the studies has been put in place, but no success has been recorded.

**Maritime Transport:** This sub-sector is to formulate programmes for the improvement of coastal shipping services such as the harmonization of maritime policies and the promotion of private sector participation particularly joint ventures in the area of transport and communications. In this regard ECOMARINE, which is a private shipping company has effectively started operation (ECOWAS, 2003).

**Air Transport:** Implementation of the Action Plan adopted in Lome on 28 February, 2003 has started. The plan seeks to address capacity building needs and the institutional restructuring of the aviation sector. Towards this end, ECOAIR, a private airline has already been floated. So far, Virgin Nigeria and Arik airline is already operating regular flights from Lagos to Freetown, Dakar, Accra and Banjul. ECOWAS has made a great progress in this aspect.

### **Telecommunications**

ECOWAS Telecommunications modernization and development programme known as INTELCOM has been established. This has made it possible to connect all the capital towns

in member-states by automatic telephone, telex and telefax links. This sub-regional telecommunication infrastructure is based in Lome, Togo (ECOWAS, 1993a) Citizens within the sub-region do not need to route their telephone calls through Europe to get other West African countries anymore, as was the case before. In addition ECOWAS is currently exploring solutions to issue of a single GSM SIM card within the region. A West African Telecommunication Regulation Association (WATRA) has been put in place to regulate the telecommunication industry in the sub-region (ECOWAS, 2003).

### **Trade Liberalization**

Article 35 of the Treaty of ECOWAS spelt out in broad terms the aims and objectives of the Community on Trade Liberalization Scheme (TLS). The scheme provides for the abolition of taxes on unprocessed goods and traditional handicrafts as far back as 1981 (ECOWAS, 1993b). This has not been fully achieved by ECOWAS, although it has negative implications on weak member-states because they may become dumping ground for sub-standard products in the region. ECOWAS established a fund to compensate member-states for revenue loss as a result of the removal of custom duties but most member states including Nigeria are not implementing the scheme. These areas of differences need to be harmonized so that all member-states can drive benefits from the liberalization scheme.

### **Monetary Cooperation**

In pursuance of ECOWAS objective of economic growth and development need to promote cooperation, cross-border payment, trade and investment through the use of common currency were seen as critical. The Community therefore set a programme to achieve cooperation, the short term idea was to build a clearing-house to facilitate payment and in the long run create a monetary union with coordinated exchange rate system. This will permit intra-ECOWAS convertibility and finally achieve a single ECOWAS currency. However, the distressful state of some economy of the member-states prevented the attainment of a single currency.

The introduction of a common currency on the other hand may have some negative effects. It could lead to money laundering and also weak the economy of some member-states. As shown on Table 2 some member-states are yet to eliminate a no-tariff barrier of monetary nature in the money cooperation programmes. Lack of cooperation is drawing the Community back from attaining its objective of economic union. The year 2015 has been set by the West Africa Monetary institution as year for the realization of a single currency by the members of ECOWAS (Awoko, 2013). If this dream comes true the member states will start to have a better feeling of economic integration. On Community level, 53% of the member-states were as far back as in 2000 yet to insert the levy in their appropriation bill. The details are shown on Table 3.

### **Protocol on Conflict Prevention and Management**

The objectives of the protocol on conflict prevention among others include prevention, management and resolution of intra and inter-states conflicts and implementation of relevant provisions of the Protocols on non-aggression and Mutual Assistance in Defence (PMAD) (Ajomale, 2000).

**TABLE 2. ECOWAS MONETRY COOPERATION PROGRAMMES**

Serial	Country	Elimination of Non tariff barrier on money	Payment of Arrears of Contribution to West Africa Clearing house (WAC)
(a)	(b)	(c)	(c)
1.	BENIN	YES	YES
2.	BURKINAFASO	YES	YES
3.	CAPE VERDE	YES	YES
4.	COTE D' IVOIRE	YES	YES
5.	GAMBIA	YES	YES
6.	GHANA	YES	YES
7.	GUINEA	YES	YES
8.	GUINEA BISSAU	YES	YES
9.	LIBERIA	NO	NO UA 5, 700,000 DUE
10.	MALI	YES	YES
11.	NIGER	YES	YES
12.	NIGERIA	YES	YES
13.	SENEGAL	YES	YES
14.	SIERRS LEONE	NO	YES
15.	TOGO		YES
		<b>80%</b>	<b>80%</b>

**Source:** ECOWAS Silver Jubilee Anniversary Achievements and Prospects 1975 – 2000.  
UA=Unit of Account (medium of comparing currency e.g. Naira against Cedi)

The implementation of the programmes under this protocol has brought more credibility to ECOWAS more than any other. For example, ECOWAS deployed a vanguard force of two Nigerian battalions and two multinational battalions to Liberia following the outbreak of fresh fighting in Monrovia in 2003. The deployment ensured the exit of Charles Taylor and restored peace in Liberia. Earlier in 1997, the Economic Community Monitoring Group (ECOMOG) ended civil war and organized democratic elections in Liberia (ECOWAS, 2003). It has also helped in restoring in peace in Guinea Bissau. It is pertinent to state that Nigeria has been the brain behind the success of this protocol in the sub-region and has spent billions of naira in ensuring political stability in the sub-region.

ECOWAS has also made a declaration on the implementation, exploration and manufacture of light weapons in West Africa. The implementation of the declaration led to the destruction of some weapons in Liberia, Sierra-Leone, Mali, Niger and Nigeria (ECOWAS, 2003). This is to ensure a reduction in illegal possession of arms in the sub-region. ECOWAS has taken a giant step in peacekeeping by setting up ECOWAS Standby Force Units. However, these units are held in the various member-states. They deployed at the command of ECOWAS on the advice of the Defence Council.



**TABLE 3. ECOWAS COUNTRIES CONTRIBUTION ON COMMUNITY LEVY**

Serial	Countries	Secretariat	Fund Capital: 1 <sup>st</sup> Tranche	Fund Capital 2 <sup>nd</sup> Tranche	Special Telecommunication Fund	Loan Arrears to the Fund	Construction of Secretariat
(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)	(e)	(f)	(g)	(h)
1.	BENIN	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
2.	BURKINAFASO	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
3.	CAPE VERDE	NO UA 1,029,112 DUE	YES	NO UA 99,043 DUE	YES		NO
4.	COTE D'IVOIRE	YES	YES	YES	YES	NO UA 1,16,820 DUE	YES
5.	GAMBIA	YES	NO DUE	YES		YES	NO UA 204,719
6.	GHANA	NO UA 1,33	YES	NO UA 1,971,551 DUE	NO UA 554,139 DUE	YES	NO UA 1,232,656 DUE
7.	GUINEA BISSAU	NO UA 1,514,300 DUE	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
8.	GUINEA	NO UA 1,029,112 DUE	YES	YES	NO UA 588,614 DUE	NO UA 1,039,022 DUE	NO UA 151,897 DUE
9.	LIBERIA	NO UA 6,968,826 DUE	NO UA 580,689 DUE	NO UA 2,629,142 DUE	YES	NO UA 152,072 DUE	NO UA 152,072 DUE
10	MALI	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
11	NIGER	NO UA 1,242,307 DUE	YES	YES	YES	YES	NO UA 152,072
12	NIGERIA	YES	YES	YES	YES	NO UA 791,025	YES
13	SENEGAL	NO UA 1,285,066 DUE	YES	YES	YES	YES	NO UA 68,786
14	SIERRS LEONE	NO UA 2,339,610 DUE	YES	YES	YES	NO	NO UA 534,34,963 DUE
15	TOGO	NO UA 1,376,859 DUE	YES	YES	YES	YES	
		<b>40%</b>	<b>80%</b>	<b>47%</b>	<b>86%</b>	<b>57%</b>	<b>47%</b>

**Source:** ECOWAS Silver Jubilee Anniversary Achievements and Prospects 1975 – 2000, . UA=Unit of Account (medium of comparing currency e.g. Naira against Cedi).

**Energy and Power**

ECOWAS has commenced the West African gas pipeline distribution within the region and plan has also gotten to advanced stage in the establishment of West African Power. The scheme is designed to obtain power supply from the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). The Manatali and Garafirin dam site at Mali and Guinea respectively are currently being developed for hydroelectricity power production (ECOWAS, 2002). These projects will facilitate establishment of industries, both small and medium scales that would fast track economic development in the region. Energy and power are the most important elements which the regional economies require for development in view of their importance in industrial and commercial activities.

**ECOWAS Court of Justice**

The Community Court of Justice was established under Article 11 of the ECOWAS revised Treaty of 1993. It came into effect on 5 November 1996, as the principal legal organ of the organization. The Court is to ensure the observance of the law and the principle of equity in the interpretation of the provisions of the treaty. It is to deal with dispute referred to it if in accordance with the provisions of Articles 56 of the Treaty.

The Court of Justice has successfully formulated its Rule of Procedure and approved by the Council of Ministers. Several cases have been filed before the Court so far, but one weaknesses of the Courts is that it does not give the Community's citizens or any individual whose rights has been infringed upon a direct access to it. In addition, the Court ought to be a means by which ECOWAS sanctions member-states that violate its protocols or decisions and stamps its authority on erring member-states. However, the court has been unable to achieve this.

**CHALLENGES OR CONSTRAINTS**

This paper has established that ECOWAS has several drawbacks which have constituted a cog in the wheel of its progress. Problems of funding, lack of political will and other bottleneck which constitute constraints to ECOWAS are discussed in the subsequent sections.

**Funding**

One of the biggest problems facing ECOWAS in achieving its objectives is funding. The economies of the member-states are not buoyant enough to sustain its development needs. Many member-states depend on foreign aids to sustain their developmental needs and to execute their national budgets and consequently, they are neck-deep in debt. ECOWAS main source of fund is the contribution from national budget and some member-states find it difficult to pay their contributions to the community funds. Table 3 showed that many of the members were neck deep in debts to the Secretariat Budget years ago. ECOWAS should therefore ensure that member-nations pay their contributions on time. This could be done through sanctioning of defaulters by the Community Court of Justice.

**Lack of Political Will**

Most of the member-states lack the political will to implement many of the community programmes in their countries. For example, Guinea has introduced the harmonized immigration Forms. In the same vein, some member-states still maintain roadblocks along

their trans-national highways e.g. Togo, Benin and Nigeria. They are unwilling to let go part their powers and sovereignty to the supranational body, which is the ECOWAS.

### **Political Instability**

Over the year, ECOWAS had to direct her energy and resources to resolving political crises within the sub-region. There have been civil wars in Sierra Leone, Liberia, Cote d'Ivoire and Cape Verde. For example the recent power tussle in Cote d'Ivoire was one of the distractions to the community development plan. It is worthy of note that in all these cases, ECOWAS was able to effect stability in these warring nations, using ECOMOG. One could also add that political instability that is persist in the sub-region is as a result of bad governance, high illiteracy, high level poverty, graft and lack of rule of law. Thus, Chilleh (2013) observed that Boko Haram insurgence and ethnic conflicts in Nigeria and Malian Conflict have already assumed a frightful magnitude within the sub-region. This is because a spillover of these crises from these countries if not checked could have devastating effect on the entire sub-region. He further states that all these and other flash points within the West African sub region if not handled decisively, the desired stability will remain elusive. As a lasting solution to these incessant crises, ECOWAS leaders should develop the capacity for the true democracy, good governance, education, poverty alleviation and the rule of law in their respective nations.

### **CONCLUSION**

This paper has established that there are linkages between integration and development and that is there is a symbiotic relationship between integration and development. The paper has assessed the implementation of the ECOWAS protocols and programmes on the major economic and political integrative instruments such as Free Movement of Persons, Right of Residence and Establishment, Trade Liberalization and Monetary Cooperation. The political integrative instruments are the Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management and Resolution, Peacekeeping and Security and ECOWAS Court of Justice. It is anticipated that the implementation of the protocols and programmes will lead to the development of West Africa and consequently improve the standard of living of its citizens although some of the protocols and programmes have negative impact on some member-states. Some of the major problems facing ECOWAS include poor funding occasioned by the poor state of the economy of some the member-states as well as the crises within the region. These and some other constraints have continued to militate against the attainment of the ECOWAS goals. It is therefore recommended that:

- a. ECOWAS should ensure that member-states pay their dues promptly.
- b. Members-states should remove roadblocks and other physical barriers in the trans-national highways.
- c. ECOWAS leaders should develop capacity for enduring democracy, good and transparent governance and sustainable rule of law.
- d. ECOWAS should accelerate the implementation of a common currency.

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