West Africa Civil Society Series (WACSeries)

Call for Papers and Articles

The West Africa Civil Society Institute (WACSI) was created by the Open Society Initiative for West Africa (OSIWA) to reinforce the institutional, operational and knowledge capacities of civil society in the region as well as enhance knowledge on civil society in the region. WACSI also serves as a resource hub for training, research and documentation, experience sharing and policy dialogue for organised civil society in West Africa.

WACSI facilitates the publication of high quality theoretical and original research papers, blog pieces, case studies or technical notes. These can be authored by academics, civil society researchers and practitioners and students from any part of the world. Contributions should aim at documenting information to educate, sensitise or raise informative debate on critical issues affecting development in West Africa.

ABOUT WACSERIES
WACSeries are analytical periodic write-ups on topical themes and issues relevant to West Africa. It emphasises the contributions of civil society organisations (CSOs) and actors to the promotion of democracy, good governance and the socio- economic development of West Africa by deepening discourse on matters affecting civil society in the region. The write-ups provide experts, researchers and practitioners a space to reflect, develop and share analyses and posit views and recommendations on emerging issues and debates.

OBJECTIVES OF WACSERIES
• To raise awareness on key development issues in West Africa;
• To generate debates and discussions on these issues;
• To proffer recommendations on civil society's role in development;
• To provide recommendations to policy makers.

The *WACSeries Issue Paper*, with a maximum of 4000 words, aims to raise awareness on key issues in West Africa.

Blogs are shorter articles of a maximum of 800 words. Contributors can use blogs as a medium to provide expert views on specific topics or provoke debates and discussions on key issues related to any of our key themes. Interested contributors will be provided with the Institute's blog guidelines to aid them.

WACSI Editorials consist of a compilation of a minimum of 4 blog articles by the same author or different articles by different authors on the same issue or thematic discourse.

WACSeries Op-Ed

The WACSeries Op-Eds are thought provoking and intellectually engaging write-ups that provide critical reflections and analysis of issues relevant to civil society and development in West Africa. The approximate number of words is 2000.

TOPICS

Contributions should address one or more of the 4 following topical issues:

Civil Society Sustainability: Sustainability[1] refers to the ability of an organisation to improve its institutional capacity to continue its activities among target populations over an extended period of time, minimise financial vulnerability, develop diversified sources of institutional and financial support, and maximise impact by providing quality services and products. Authors can consider developing articles related but not limited to leadership transition in civil society. CSO accountability and transparency, governance and operational practices within CSOs.

Technology for development: Technology for development refers to the use and application of technological tools and systems for social, economic, and political development. It involves the deployment of technological innovations, with the aim of combating poverty, promoting social inclusion, good governance and economic growth.

Women and youth leadership: Women and youth constitute a majority of the population in Cameroon, Chad and West African countries. However, they are not given equal opportunities as men especially in leadership roles. Women and youth play a key role towards the development of their countries and the West African region. Author interested to contribute articles related to this theme can explore issues related to the roles women and youth can play in the development of the region, the challenges they face or examine key successes that have been realised by women and or youth, deriving lessons learnt to enlighten, encourage and empower others.

Enabling Environment for Civil Society: The enabling environment refers to the conditions within which civil society operates. Articles will seek to address issues affecting the legal, policy and regulatory environment for civil society's development effectiveness. That is, all the forces that shape and influence the size, extent and functioning of the civic space. Contributors can analyse issues related to the legal and political restrictions affecting civic space, legitimacy, transparency and accountability of CSOs, collaboration and partnerships among CSOs and other development actors.

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[1] Anna Benton and Alvaro Monroy, 'Business Approaches for the Reproductive Health NGO', n.d., 25. URL: https://www.shopsplusproject.org/sites/default/files/resources/973_file_35_Business_Approaches_for_the_Reproductive_Health_NGO.pdf

APPLICATION DOCUMENTS

For **blogs** and **WACSeries Op-Eds**, we encourage contributors to share an overview of the idea with WACSI's Knowledge Management team via email stating a deadline for which they intend to submit a first draft. If the contributor intends to author an Editorial (made of at least 4 blog articles), s/he should provide details on the themes s/he seeks to address in each of the blog articles. Our team will either confirm the theme(s) or follow up with contributors for clarity and confirmation.

For **WACSeries Issue Papers**, we encourage contributors to submit the following;

   1. An abstract (400 words max) that provides an overall idea on how the contributor seeks to address one or more of the issues raised in the call.
   2. Author's Name, Affiliation, Email Address, Phone Number
   3. CV or short biographical details.

Authors interested in submitting a blog article, an Op-Ed or contribute to our editorials are encouraged to share their idea via an email for exploration and discussion. They can also contact Jimm Fomunjong (jcfomunjong@wacsi.org) or Nancy Kankam Kusi (nkusi@wacsi.org) and cc research@wacsi.org to check the suitability of their proposed contribution.

PUBLISHING SCHEDULE   Open (year-round)

Publication Review Schedule
 * **1 week after submission of abstract:** Notice of acceptance with feedback on abstract and way forward.
 * **2 weeks after approval of abstract:** Contributor submits first draft.
 * **2 weeks after submission of first draft:** WACSI team provides feedback on first draft.
 * **2 weeks after review of 1st draft:** Contributor submits second draft.
 * **1 week after receipt of 2nd draft from author:** Review by WACSI team and submission for review by an external editor.
 * **2 weeks after 2nd draft:** Publication (estimated) of paper or as discussed between WACSI and the author.

BENEFITS
  WACSeries authors benefit from opportunities that are not limited to:
 * Expert input and guidance to publish on WACSeries editions;
 * Dissemination of WACSeries through a wide regional and international network of research institutes;
 * Media engagement at local and international level to raise awareness on topical issues raised in the papers;
 * Press release on publication and/ or publicity on social media;
 * A 10% discount on a single WACSI fee-paying training of your choice;
 * Invitation to WACSI-led seminars and conferences on issues related to the topic addressed by the author;
 * Increased visibility and exposure to West Africa research and practitioner networks;
 * Increased visibility to a global audience with an interest in civil society in West Africa;
 * Contributing to thought-leadership on civil society and development in West Africa and having the platform to make that contribution.

KEY CONSIDERATIONS
- WACSI does not provide any financial remuneration for submissions under this call.
- WACSI reserves the right to approve proposal submissions for further development and publication. Any approved paper/article will be published by WACSI at the appropriate time.

All final papers are subjected to a technical review. All content of papers must be original, void of plagiarism and unpublished. Interdisciplinary projects and jointly-authored papers are welcome.