

**CULTURAL EXCHANGES AND THEIR IMPLICATIONS FOR  
REGIONAL INTEGRATION IN WEST AFRICA: A CASE STUDY OF  
GHANA AND NIGERIA**

**BY**

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**LEGON**

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**DECLARATION**

I, Cherk Ahmed Klutse, do hereby declare that this work is entirely by my personal effort, supervised by Dr. Juliana Appiah. I further declare that all the works that have been consulted or quoted have been duly acknowledged. I also declare that this dissertation has not been presented either in part or in whole for any other degree elsewhere.

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## **DEDICATION**

This work is dedicated to the Almighty God, for his everlasting grace and favor upon my life,  
and to my parents, for their unwavering love and support.

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## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

|          |   |   |
|----------|---|---|
| ACET     | - | African Center for Economic Transformation                |
| ACP      | - | African, Caribbean and Pacific Group of States            |
| AEC      | - | African Economic Community                                |
| AFAC     | - | African Arts and Crafts Expo                              |
| AFRICULT | - | Intergovernmental Conference on Cultural Policies, Africa |
| AFRIMA   | - | All Africa Music Awards                                   |
| AfriYOCC | - | African Youth Conference on Climate Change                |
| ASSIST   | - | Alcohol, Smoking and Substance Involvement Screening Test |
| AU       | - | African Union   |
| AUC      | - | African Union Commission                                  |
| AYICC    | - | African Youth Initiative on Climate Change                |
| CIAD     | - | Second Conference of Intellectuals from Africa & Diaspora |
| CPA      | - | Commonwealth Parliamentary Association                    |
| CWA      | - | Compact with Africa                                       |
| ECOWAS   | - | Economic Community of West African States                 |
| FESPACO  | - | Pan African Film and Television Festival of Ouagadougou   |
| GTA      | - | Ghana Tourism Authority                                   |

|          |   |  |
|----------|---|--|
| IDPs     | - | Internally Displaced Persons                                     |
| IPU      | - | Inter-Parliamentary Union  |
| MDAs     | - | Ministries, Departments and Agencies                             |
| MP       | - | Member of Parliament   |
| NAFAC    | - | National Festival of Arts and Culture                            |
| NCAC     | - | National Commission of Arts and Culture                          |
| NCC      | - | National Commission on Culture                                   |
| NDCs     | - | Nationally determined contributions                              |
| OAU      | - | Organization of African Unity                                    |
| PANAFEST | - | Pan African Historical Theatre Festival                          |
| PJCC     | - | Permanent Joint Commission of Cooperation                        |
| PPP      | - | Public – Private Partnerships                                    |
| SSATP    | - | Sub-Saharan Africa Transport Policy Program                      |
| UNECA    | - | United Nations Economic Commission for Africa                    |
| UNESCO   | - | United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization |
| UNHCR    | - | United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees                    |
| WHO      | - | World Health Organization  |
| WHO-AFRO | - | World Health Organization Regional Office for Africa             |

WUCWO - World Union of Catholic Women's Organizations.

ZUFF - ZUMA Film Festival

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## **ABSTRACT**

Regional integration scholars have written extensively on the role culture plays in the overall success or otherwise of regional integration the world over. The role of culture in the integration of Africa has also received some attention. The Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) in 1987, realizing the importance of culture to regional integration, and accepting that the ECOWAS region had such cultural diversity that could be harnessed for the good of the sub-region, promulgated a Cultural Protocol. 31 years after the promulgation of the Protocol, very little is known about how member states have implemented the Protocol. Employing primary and secondary data, this study sought to fill this gap, using Ghana and Nigeria as case studies. The study found, among others, that bilateral cultural agreements, which is the first objective of the Protocol, has not been achieved between ECOWAS member states. The study concludes by proffering some recommendations for mitigating these challenges, such as public-private partnerships and the sensitization of the populace on the benefits of the cultural activities to the individual governments and to the ECOWAS.

## CHAPTER ONE

### INTRODUCTION

#### 1.0 Background to the Study

Regional integration involves a complex web of cooperation among countries located in a defined geographic locality<sup>1</sup>. Regional integration relies on the synchronization of policies of the member states in certain key areas, such as trade, transport, commerce, etc.<sup>2</sup> the main aim of regional integration is to drive economic growth and development within the area of focus.<sup>3</sup> Regional integration as a means of development has been in vogue since the end of World War II in 1945, with the ever-changing character of international cooperation and the advent of increased globalization.<sup>4</sup>

The African integration agenda dates back to the colonial era with the binding of territories under one European power together in order to better manage the exploitation of the resources of the land.<sup>5</sup> After the wave of independence swept over the continent in the 1950s and 1960s, African states decided to integrate economically to better enhance the rate of development on the continent.<sup>6</sup> Kwame Nkrumah, an advocate of continental unity, experimented with the idea of a political union of African states. He spearheaded the establishment of the Ghana, Guinea and Mali Union, this union unfortunately was short-lived, existing from 1960-1963.<sup>7</sup>

Some scholars have lauded this as the precursor to the Organization of African Unity, which came into being in 1963 in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. This organization included all the independent African countries at the time and had the vision of promoting solidarity and unity amongst African countries.<sup>8</sup> In all purposes, the vision of the Organization of African Unity has been pursued

relentlessly since 1963, helping to rally the countries in Africa to unite and accomplish common goals. In West Africa, the initial attempts at integration begun with the conference in Lagos 1963 with the aim of harmonizing the industries in the sub-region.<sup>9</sup>

A series of conferences followed suit, with the 1967 conference in Accra proposing an Economic Community of West Africa, this agreement was ultimately signed by all participating countries. In November that year, the Senegal River Riparian States Organization came into existence, with Guinea, Senegal, Mauritania and Mali as the members. The organization sought to extend its mission of economic cooperation to all the countries in the sub region this unfortunately did not materialize.<sup>10</sup> In May 1975, well aware of the urgent need to develop, 15 West African countries met in Nigeria and from the deliberations emerged the Lagos treaty which established the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS).<sup>11</sup>

ECOWAS was established with the main purpose of providing an opportunity for the countries in the West Africa sub-region to work together for the common good of their respective populations. The areas of cooperation envisaged under ECOWAS include, inter alia, economic, political and cultural areas.<sup>12</sup> Currently, ECOWAS member states combined have a population of over 350million inhabitants, with many different cultural groups and sub-groupings<sup>13</sup>; this has necessitated ECOWAS to undertake cultural integration as an aspect of its overall goal of economic integration of the member states, in order to bring the peoples of the sub-region closer.<sup>14</sup>

Cultural integration calls for the people of one society to interact and assimilate the cultural nuances of a different society. This mainly takes place in the form of exchanges between the peoples of the individual countries, be it formal exchanges undertaken by the state or informal exchanges of individual initiatives. ECOWAS does this through its Social and Cultural Affairs

Commission. Pursuant to Article 62(1) of the revised ECOWAS Treaty, members agreed to pursue the objectives captured in the Protocol on Cultural Framework Agreement.<sup>15</sup>

The Protocol defines culture as an integral aspect of the socio-economic development of the ECOWAS member states. It further calls for the integration of culture into the developmental agenda of the respective countries. According to the Protocol, economic independence of the people of the sub-region can be best achieved when the economic policies are infused with the culture of the people. The major objectives of the Agreement are as follows:

1. “Improvement of the populations’ standard of living and social progress through the development of creativity.”
2. “Regional integration by means of community development which takes into account the specific socio-cultural realities and aspirations of the Member State population while at the same time responding to their fundamental needs and integrating their economic and cultural dimensions.”
3. “The creation of Community awareness upheld by a sense of belonging to the same cultural Community, which is founded on historical, linguistic and geo-political links. Affirming the presence of, and thus both safeguarding and promoting the specific cultural identities of the Member States and of the Community they form, through international exchanges and the reinforcement of regional bilateral co-operation and the development of inter-regional co-operation.”<sup>16</sup>

## **1.1 Statement of the Research Problem**

ECOWAS recognizes the need for cultural exchanges to help its integration agenda and to this end; it has captured it in both the Revised Treaty and the Protocol on Cultural Framework Agreement. The cultural policies of ECOWAS has as a core objective, the agenda of encouraging cooperation among the members on cultural issues. This is intended to create a sense of oneness among the various countries and to decrease the level of citizen resistance to ECOWAS policies during implementation. The Protocol thus contains a series of plans and objectives that is geared towards achieving this goal.<sup>17</sup> The protocol on cultural framework agreement has been in existence since 1987 and this study seeks to investigate the extent to which implementation has been carried out by member states, using Ghana and Nigeria as case studies.

## **1.2 Research Questions**

1. What is the role of culture in regional integration and how does this apply to the integration agenda of ECOWAS?
2. How is the ECOWAS Cultural Protocol Framework Agreement being implemented 30yrs after promulgation in Ghana and Nigeria?
3. What are the challenges that Ghana and Nigeria face in implementing the ECOWAS Cultural Protocol Framework Agreement and how can they be resolved?

### **1.3 Objectives of the Study**

1. To identify the role culture plays in the drive for regional integration in Africa specifically West Africa.
2. To find out the specific measures that have been put in place in Ghana and Nigeria towards the implementation of the objectives captured in the protocol.
3. To investigate the challenges that Ghana and Nigeria face in implementing the ECOWAS Cultural Protocol Framework Agreement and how can they be resolved.

### **1.4 Scope of the Study**

The ECOWAS Cultural Protocol Framework Agreement is divided into 23 articles; this study focuses on article 15, which talks about the cultural exchanges objectives of the Protocol. Specifically, objectives 1, 2, 4 & 6.

1. “Bilateral cultural exchange between Member States and cultural diffusion within the Community.”
2. “Meetings and exchanges between artists, Community leaders, producers, scientists, intellectuals, youths, women, cultural associations, workers, etc.”
4. “The organization of cultural events in Member States, which will be of interest to several Member States at the same time, for example: shows, exhibitions, forums, fairs etc.”
6. “The exchange of programs and cultural broadcasts between radio and television centers, media libraries and audio-visual production centers in the Member States”

Using Ghana and Nigeria as case studies, this study seeks to investigate the level of implementation of the above objectives since the protocol was penned in 1987.

### **1.5 Rationale of the Study**

This study seeks to investigate the implications of cultural exchanges on regional integration in West Africa through its cultural protocol and to ascertain how the protocol and in particular article 15, objectives 1, 2, 4 & 6 are being implemented, using Ghana and Nigeria as case studies. The study will add to the already existing store of scholarly knowledge about the importance of cross-cultural understanding in the regional integration process and help ECOWAS improve its cultural policies.

### **1.6 Theoretical Framework**

The cultural theory of international relations undergirds this study. The lead proponent of the theory is Richard N. Lebow and it is a constructivist school of thought based on the theories of motives and identity derived from the ancient Greeks. Lebow in his 2008 book, *A Cultural Theory of International Relations*, underscores culture and identity as major influences of the development of the international political order and from his analysis; he derives a direct link between changes in values and beliefs to changes in political decision-making.

He further alludes to the fact that an essential determinant of the level and type of interaction between the international system and the actors operating within it is their cultural values system. The theory underlines the importance of culture in understanding international behavior, and the aim of the theory is to broaden the understanding of human motives and its implications on international relations.<sup>18</sup>

Jacques Hymans criticized the theory by saying that it is nothing but “psychological constructivism that draws on ancient and modern insights into psychology of identity to produce a radical break from our conventional understandings of the dynamics of politics.” He further denies the need to take into consideration the mindset of individuals when enacting theories of international relations.<sup>19</sup>

Rational Choice Model scholars such as Jonathan Levin and Paul Milgrom also disapproved of the theory because to rationalists, psychology can only be used to describe deviations from rational behavior. In addition, another criticism of the rationalist theory is that whilst individual members of the society may be emotionally driven in decision-making, states are always rational when presented with choices to make.<sup>20</sup>

In concluding his book, Richard Lebow establishes the role culture plays in understanding international behavior. The aim of Lebow’s Cultural Theory is the enhancement of the knowledge of how human motives affects international relations. It further highlights how values and practices developed by a specific group of people can be deployed as a tool for understanding international relations.

Despite the criticisms above, the theory fits the scope for this study because of its focus on the human society and not the state and thus falls within the framework of the cultural policies of ECOWAS. This research relies upon the principle that culture is an integral part of the regional integration process in ECOWAS, in other words the slow progress of the integration agenda of ECOWAS can be attributed to the lack of implementation of the existing cultural protocol objectives. Mobilization of the social and cultural capital needed by ECOWAS to integrate fully can only be garnered after cultural cohesion has been attained. The approach of this study just like

the cultural theory of international relations is people centric and emphasizes the primacy of culture as a tool for regional integration in West Africa.

## **1.7 Literature Review**

Dasmani Laary, in his article, “Arts and Culture, an alternative to grow African economies” urges the governments of the ECOWAS member states to pay attention to the arts and culture sectors of their economies through funding and policy making so as to quickly expand their economies and break their over reliance on raw materials.

The cultural sector is estimated to be worth a whopping 8% of the world’s gross domestic product. Laary quotes a senior official from the Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology as saying; “Member countries ought to strengthen exchanges and co-operation between cultural entrepreneurs and artistes from West Africa and Europe to promote trade between the two regions.”

The lip service paid to the cultural sector by governments in West Africa is a source of concern for the ACP Plus Culture Policy Project team. In addition, other experts who were present at the stakeholders meeting in Accra all expressed their support for a more rigorous funding scheme for the cultural industry. The team leader asserts that the culture of many African countries holds immense potential for developing those countries. He cited poor quality of marketing and the low standards of packaging as the major impediments to the realization of the cultural potential of Africa.

Mr. Chris Nayo, the team leader, then issued a call to action to the various governments in Africa. He tasked them to invest more capital, both human and financial into the cultural industries in

order to increase the gains that accrue from it. The cultural sector holds the key to economic diversification, through this the societal inequalities that plague Africa can be resolved as well as the overall economies of the countries enhanced.

According to a recent study, as many as a billion people travelled across the globe in 2012. This statistic shows the amount of revenue that can be realized when African countries take advantage of the intrinsic connection that exist between culture and tourism. In conclusion, Laary called on the governments of the respective countries to standardize the cultural sector and its products and tasked them to increase the technical capacity of the human resource in the sector through trainings, forums and workshops.<sup>21</sup>

Nnamdi Madichie in his 2017 article "Highlife Music in West Africa: Down Memory Lane" writes that the lyrics of the songs that are prevalent in the modern African urban music scene serve as the voice and the conscience of the community of the community; it is through these lyrics that African domestic and external politics can be monitored.

He begins with an overview of some of the significant landmarks in the history of highlife music in West Africa, Africa and beyond. The influences of certain musicians are also catalogued from E.T. Mensah to Ikwue Bongos. He also alludes to the impact highlife had on the global image of Nigeria, and he cites "Which Way Nigeria?" by Sonny Okosun as an example of such a song. A careful review of the lyrics of the song provides insight into the plight of Nigeria as a "giant of Africa" during a period in time when the people of Nigeria suffered greatly from economic instability coupled with security issues.

Through some tours of Europe, the highlife musicians of yore did their best to portray the continent in a better light than was the case then. On the national level, songs by Victor Olaiya were

composed in many different languages, Igbo, Hausa and Yoruba are but a few of the languages, to help better unify the people of Nigeria. In his article, he continually stresses the power of song texts, and how much they can affect the development of a people. He refers to singers such as Fela, Sonny Okosun, Bobby Benson, Rex Lawson, E T Mensah and Victor Uwaifo and their songs that influenced the lives and history of not just individuals but states and governments.

He finally concludes with the mention of the new wave of cross border collaborations that have become the norm of the day, where artists from one country teams up with artists from another country to make music for wider audience notable examples he mentioned are Asem of Ghana and Flavour of Nigeria teaming up. The possibilities for cultural integration agenda of ECOWAS are limitless as these collaborations can serve as a stepping-stone to closer ties between the peoples and cultures of West Africa.<sup>22</sup>

Jenny F. Mbaye, in her article, “Musical borderlands: A cultural perspective of regional integration in Africa” provides a vivid and practical process of recognizing the regional integration agenda of Africa, through the inquiry into the deployment of musical practices across borders.

She termed it African musical borderlands; initially restricted to interactions between individuals in different countries it has now caught the attention of the national institutions of culture in the various African countries. She stress the existence of a geographic demarcation of the African musical borderlands which to her cuts across the colonially imposed borders of the existing countries, which demonstrates the deeply rooted notions about culture and its many productions, namely music, dance aesthetic displays and practices and articulates a new idea of what form regional integration in Africa should take.

The paper illustrated, through interactions with the various participants from West and Central Africa, how relationships exist between production methods, which in turn allows societies to undertake new political relations.

Consequently, as the trans urban hip hop participants demonstrated, “borderland culture is actually doing the ‘work’ of building a context for cooperation”; This emphasis the primacy of culture and cultural exchanges as the foundation stone for regional integration and cooperation.<sup>23</sup>

Oluyemi Fayomi, in his 2015 article “Transnational and integrative cultural roles of Nollywood entertainment media in West Africa: The case study of Ghana and Benin”, the article evaluated the multi-national role that movies produced in Nollywood had in the West African sub-region. He alluded that Nollywood movies help bring the people of ECOWAS closer which is in direct accordance with the ideals of the founding fathers of ECOWAS. He concludes with a recommendation that the governments of the respective countries and the ECOWAS institutions to capitalize on the popularity of the Nollywood film industry to increase the rate of cultural integration in West Africa.

In addition to this, his assertion is that films that will promote tolerance of other citizens of the member States of ECOWAS and other African groupings should be encouraged. Such films will enhance integration agenda of ECOWAS within the sub-region of West Africa and overall also integration agenda of African Union with the continent of Africa. He arrives at this conclusion through a thorough study of participants derived from The Benin republic and Ghana, who through a series of interviews and questionnaires provided insight into the effect of Nollywood films and its content on people outside of Nigeria.

He posits that Nollywood influences African culture and since cultures are creations of human interactions, changes can be influenced through the transmission of cultural values. Nollywood produces over 2000 films every year and all these films speak to aspects of social life such as cultural anxieties and this is done in a way that no other media can do especially the involvement of the individuals living in villages and cities in political discourse. Just like the ECOWAS cultural policies posits, so has the Nollywood film industry provided a platform for cross cultural interactions to take place between peoples of different cultural dispensations. The films and the interactions they generate helps to foster sense of oneness among the populations of the ECOWAS member states both on the continent and abroad.

He finally concludes that Nollywood is indeed a voice of the “common” African with their own regime of socio-cultural and political meanings. Pursuant, to article 15 objective 6 of the ECOWAS Cultural Protocol Framework Agreement, member states are encouraged to facilitate the transfer and exchange of films, radio and television productions amongst the various production houses in the individual countries.

This makes the role of Nollywood in the ECOWAS integration even more pronounced and for some budding film industries such as Ghana’s own “Ghallywood” and “Kumawood” it dawns on the governments to learn from the success chalked by Nollywood to rake up more citizen support for ECOWAS integration.<sup>24</sup>

## **1.8 Sources of Data & Research Methodology**

Data for this research was derived from primary and secondary sources. The primary data was acquired through semi-structured interviews with personnel such as Mr. Sebastian Beliwine

(Director of the Africa and Regional Integration Bureau at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Regional Integration of Ghana), Mr. William Boateng (Director, Policy Planning and Evaluation, National Commission on Culture, Ghana), Miss Ama Amponsah (Public Relations Officer, National Commission on Culture, Ghana) and the Head of Mission, Nigerian High Commission, Ghana.

Semi-structured interviews were used because it provided reliable, comparable qualitative data. Information obtained from the semi-structured interviews did not just provide answers but also provided the reasons for the answers. Secondary data was obtained from relevant books, journal and magazine articles from the Balme Library, African Studies library as well as the internet.

Documents from the various ministries and organizations listed above; on the research, area was also consulted to assist in the study. The methodology employed for this study was qualitative in nature. As a research strategy, qualitative methods are inductive, constructive, and interpretive. The study also employed purposive sampling. Purposive sampling technique, or judgment sampling, refers to the deliberate selection of an informant due to the qualities he or she possesses.<sup>25</sup>

In other words, the selection of participants is done based on their ability to deliver the necessary information by virtue of knowledge of the subject matter or experience regarding the subject matter. The data obtained was also sorted out by manually transcribing the recordings of my respondents. Ethical considerations were taken into account first by seeking the consent of interviewees before recording their views and opinions on the subject matter, thus the information obtained was based on anonymity and confidentiality. Respondents who wanted to remain anonymous preferred to be identified as “officials” which is reflected in the study.

### **1.9 Limitations of Study**

The study encountered a few challenges during the process of data and information gathering. A major problem was the reluctance of some targeted organizations to share information; this hindered the study from getting a better idea of the situation in these organizations. Another challenge was the time allocated to conduct the study; the time was very limited and thus affected the final study. Finally, the study run the risk of getting one-sided information from the persons that were interviewed. Despite these limitations, the study endeavored to cover all the salient points to achieve the stipulated research objectives.

### **1.10 Arrangement of Chapters**

The study is organized into four chapters.

Chapter one constitutes the introduction;

Chapter two provides a historical overview of the cultural policies of Africa;

Chapter three is an analysis of the implementation of the ECOWAS Cultural Protocol Framework Agreement, using Ghana and Nigeria as case studies.

Chapter four is a summary of findings, conclusions and recommendations.

## Endnotes

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## CHAPTER 2

### HISTORICAL OVERVIEW OF THE CULTURAL POLICIES OF AFRICA

#### 2.0 Introduction

This chapter aims to chart the history of cultural policies on the African continent. It is in three parts. The first part focuses on the cultural policies of the organization of African Unity, the second part highlights the cultural policies that the African Union have had since its inception in 2001 and finally the third part of this chapter tackles the policymaking attempts of ECOWAS with emphasis laid on the Cultural Protocol Framework Agreement of 1987.

To start with, culture as a term has had many definitions over the years, as it means different things to different people. According to Raymond Williams, the word culture is one of the most complicated words in the English language to define and explain.<sup>1</sup> For the purposes of this study, I will use the African Union's definition of culture as captured in the Charter for African Cultural Renaissance. It defines culture as the "set of distinct linguistic, spiritual, material, intellectual and emotional features of a group of people and it encompasses traditions, beliefs and value systems."<sup>2</sup> In other words, culture is the way of life of a group of people". To better, harness the potential of culture, the African states and its continental regional groupings have enacted and adopted various cultural policies.<sup>3</sup> Cultural policy refers to the conscious plan of action taken by governments, community organizations, and private institutions, among others, to meet certain laid out cultural goals in the society using the resources at the society's disposal at the said time. It is undertaken after a thorough evaluation of the cultural development needs of the society in question.<sup>4</sup> The cultural policies of the continental and sub-regional organizations all sought to affect the actions and decisions taken in the cultural sector with the provision of a series of aims, objectives and

measures. A major issue of these policies is the broad range of measures that they set out to accomplish seeing, as culture is an all-encompassing social phenomenon. There has been many debates as to what type of cultural policy to pursue.

## **2.1 Organization of African Unity**

Cultural policies as a part of Africa's developmental agenda is not a new phenomenon. Initial attempts at a continental policy for culture dates back to the 1960s, the most notable of these attempts is the Pan-African Cultural Manifesto of 1969.

### **2.1.1 Pan-African Cultural Manifesto (1969)**

Participants of the Symposium of the Pan-African Cultural Festival held in Algeria in 1969, under the auspices of the Organization of African Unity, proposed a continent wide conceptual framework for African Cultural policies. This framework centered on three main themes;

- “the realities of African culture”
- “the role of African culture in national liberation struggle and in the consolidation of African Unity”
- “The role of African culture in the economic and social development of Africa.”<sup>5</sup>

The manifesto asserted under the first theme that culture constitutes a vibrant component of the African people. They agreed that African culture had long been relegated to the background by forces beyond the control of the African themselves, namely colonialism. They went further to allude to the fact that Africans had to secure their cultures and give it the due consideration needed to take it off the shelves and displays in museums, where it sits collecting dust and to put it in the

forefront of the socio-economic development agenda. To the participants, the new cultural policy was to bridge the gap between African culture and modern science and technology.

Under the second theme, the role of African culture in national liberation struggle and in the consolidation of African unity, the framework stressed that for the countries that were independent at the time, culture had played a pivotal role in their liberation struggles. For countries under the yoke of colonialism, the framework advised an evaluation of the cultural components of their struggles. According to the Pan-African Manifesto, liberation was primarily a cultural act.<sup>6</sup> On African unity, the framework emphasized that even in the myriad of diversity that was the culture on the continent, African culture from all over the continent were just “specific expressions of a single universality”.<sup>7</sup> To the participants, the destiny of the people of Africa be you from Algeria, Ghana or Uganda was the same. The framework highlighted the ability of culture to bring people together beyond ethnic and tribal divisions and further stressed the importance of recognizing this ability and harnessing it for the greater good of the continent.

The Manifesto affirmed that the drive for economic and social development in Africa could only be achieved when culture and all its components are taken into account during policymaking. Two main goals were put forth: to free African society from the socio-cultural conditions that hinder its development and to rid African culture of alienating factors, whilst integrating it into a movement of mass action.<sup>8</sup> The participants called for a revitalization of the African culture with science and technology taking center stage. To the participants, the African mentality was to be retrained and emphasis laid on education, and that these actions must be collective in nature with all members of the OAU taking part in its implementation.

The Manifesto also came up with some recommendations for the use of the various components of African culture in the lives of the African people. There were 40 proposals captured in the Pan-African Cultural Manifesto, among others;

- “To multiply cultural exchanges by way of exhibitions, colloquia, seminars, and meetings of young people, women, workers, intellectuals, and militants, in order to foster greater mutual understanding;”
- “To create a Pan-African Institute of Cinema. In this field, Africa needs to create its own language and find the appropriate means to make this language accessible to the people. African states must get organized for the production, circulation, and distribution of cinematic works and fight against the monopolies that block the development of an authentically African cinema;”
- “To exchange programs of an economic, social, and cultural nature among African radio stations, television networks, and film archives, specifically by means of the Union of National Radio and Television stations of Africa”
- “To organize cultural inter-regional seminars and painting and craft exhibits with the goal of encouraging the economic and social development of our continent;”<sup>9</sup>

### **2.1.2 Meeting of Experts (1969)**

The next stage in the history of cultural policies in Africa was the 1969 meeting of experts in Dakar, Senegal. The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) convened, as part of the framework for preparing the Intergovernmental Conference on the

Institutional, Administrative and Financial Aspects of Cultural Policies (Venice, September 1970), convened a meeting of experts in Dakar in October 1969 on the topic, Problems of Cultural policies in Africa. The aim of the meeting was to ascertain the various obstacles that hindered the effective implementation of the cultural policies in Africa. The problems they highlighted were,

- Inadequate funds
- Meager efforts and initiatives
- Incoherent policies<sup>10</sup>

The experts accentuated that African governments did not recognize the importance of culture in the socio-economic development of their countries and as such, this affected their commitment and the amount of public funds they pumped into the cultural sector. The experts pointed out that the responsibility of championing cultural policies fell directly in the lap of the government, mainly due to their control of the mass media and educational system. These two sectors of the economy were key to the cultural development of the various countries. A call for a centralization of planning and financing of the cultural sector at national level was made by the experts at Dakar with emphasis on decentralizing the implementation of the cultural policies. They attributed this to the dynamic nature of culture and the creativity it needs to thrive and develop which relies heavily on the potential of the masses. This they hoped would help bring the policies together in a more coherent manner.

Funding of cultural projects and policies relied heavily on the government and this the experts believed was woefully inadequate since the governments of African countries had a lot on their plate and lacked the financial might to undertake a lot of projects. The reliance of the African countries on largess from foreign donors and countries also crippled their ability to invest heavily

into the cultural sector. They stressed the need to seek out new funding avenues such as private sector partnerships and funding from bilateral and multilateral cooperation agencies and the need for income generating cultural products and activities. The experts also reiterated the need for a framework to help foster infrastructural development needed to promote the cultural sector. The individual African countries lacked the needed infrastructure to produce cultural goods and this posed a significant problem to the cultural policies being undertaken. They suggested the OAU and other regional and sub-regional bodies take up the mantle of providing the necessary infrastructure to help in the production of cultural films, books, among others. The meeting highlighted the role culture had to play in unifying the continent and how pivotal it was to the restoration of the psyche of the African people. Finally, the meeting proposed a series of concrete measures that would contribute to the promotion of the cultural policies of Africa.<sup>11</sup>

### **2.1.3 Intergovernmental Conference on Cultural Policies in Africa (1975)**

A watershed moment in the history of African Cultural policies happened in 1975. The Intergovernmental Conference on Cultural Policies in Africa (AFRICACULT) took place in Accra from October 27 – November 6 1975. It was a momentous occasion that had far-reaching consequences. Up to date, its findings, and conclusions are base materials in the understanding and analysis of cultural policies in Africa. The AFRICACULT Conference came out in its final communique with the following observations, among others,

- “African cultural diversity is a factor of equilibrium and creative fertility, serving the cause of national integration;”

- “the wealth of the cultural heritage shared by all the peoples of Africa, which is the historical basis of African personality, is the surest guarantee of African unity;”
- “Cultural cooperation among free and equal partners fosters enrichment of cultures in a spirit of mutual respect and international understanding and world peace;”<sup>12</sup>

This signified the first time that a UNESCO regional conference put culture squarely in the realm of promoting development.

#### **2.1.4 Cultural Charter of Africa (1976)**

In 1976, the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the Organization of African Unity adopted the Cultural Charter for Africa. This marked the culmination of all the workshops and meetings undertaken to better enhance cultural policies on the continent and for 29 years, this document was the most important reference for cultural policy on the continent. The Cultural Charter from its preamble asserts that strengthening understanding and cooperation among the African states was a sure bet way of fostering unity and solidarity that would transcend “ethnic and national divergences”.<sup>13</sup> It also confirmed the role culture had to play in development before it laid out the various aims, objectives and principles of the treaty. The aims and objectives of the Charter captured in article 1, included, among others;

- “the encouragement of cultural cooperation with a view to the strengthening of African unity as well as a better understanding among peoples; development of dynamic African values and rejection of any impediment to progress.”

- “the liberation of the African peoples from socio-cultural conditions, which impede their development;”
- “the rehabilitation, restoration, preservation and promotion of the African cultural heritage”<sup>14</sup>

The Charter further laid out the principles of the document in article 2 and it included, inter alia;

- “access of all citizens to education and to culture”
- “exchange and dissemination of cultural experience between African countries, in the field of cultural decolonization in all its forms.”
- “integration of science and modern technology into the cultural life of the African peoples;”<sup>15</sup>

To accomplish the various aims, objectives and principles laid out in the Charter, the Assembly proposed a series of implementation strategies and actions. Among them were,

- organize national and pan-African cultural festivals;
- “promote participation in cultural life as well as in the development and implementation of cultural policies, paying special attention to the active involvement of the young;”
- “establish appropriate institutions for the development, preservation and dissemination of culture”
- “establish appropriate institutions for the development, preservation and dissemination of culture”

- “promote cultural cooperation at the inter-African and international levels through joint cultural activities (festivals, symposia, art exhibitions) and periodical discussions of major issues, exchange of persons, information, documentation and cultural material, establishment of cultural research centers on national, regional and pan-African levels”
- “create an Inter-African Fund for the promotion of cultural studies and programs;”<sup>16</sup>

The state parties all agreed to these implementation actions and with respect to the inter-African fund as proposed by the Charter, it was created at the 17<sup>th</sup> Ordinary Session of the Heads of State and Government of the Organization of African Unity held in Freetown, Sierra Leone in July 1980.<sup>17</sup> The Fund provided the OAU with the necessary means to help lay the right foundations for the realization of the benefits of culture. The Fund sort to assist projects and programs intended to, inter alia,

- “develop cultural industries in Africa as well as create a means of having more direct and greater contacts with the peoples through audiovisual aids and the mass media”
- “Identify, restore and promote African cultural heritage.”
- “Make African languages modern tools for communication and dissemination of knowledge.”<sup>18</sup>

The Fund stressed the need for cultural cooperation, intended to ignite the fire of togetherness and unity among the peoples of the continent.<sup>19</sup> To this end, the fund provided the needed resources to help increase cross cultural exchanges among the various states through funding fairs, seminars, film shows, among others<sup>20</sup> all in hopes of increasing mutual understanding and cross-cultural respect. It also decided to break the ideology of cultural cooperation being the forte of the rich and

elite. The Assembly believed and, rightfully so, that cultural cooperation encompassed every aspect of the lives of the state, from ordinary people to royalty.<sup>21</sup>

### **2.1.5 Lagos Plan of Action (1985)**

The next stage in the history of cultural policies in Africa was the 21<sup>st</sup> session of the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the Organization of African Unity in 1985. The “Declaration of the Heads of State and Government of the Organization of African Unity on the Cultural Aspects in the Lagos Plan of Action”<sup>22</sup> also known as the Lagos Plan of Action was adopted. This declaration underscored the need to analyze the interplay between the cultural aspects of the Lagos Plan of Action and the other factors such as the political and economic. To achieve this; the declaration outlined some guidelines, including;

- “Priority should be given to the role of culture as an essential dimension of the global development process, which should, however not be solely aimed at economic growth. There is an urgent need to integrate social and cultural factors within our development strategies to ensure a balanced and self-reliant development;”
- “Development should thus take its root from our people’s culture and be consistent with their values to emancipate them from them from all forms of economic, social, political and cultural dependence;”
- “Cultural identities, as dynamic process of continuity, creativity and attitudes vis-à-vis innovation, should be the basis and finality of development, promoting and safeguarding stability and structural cohesion, as well as the social development of peoples;”<sup>23</sup>

The declaration proposed a communal approach to implementation, whereby individual states had a role to play in implementing the agreed upon guidelines and the collective sum of the member states of the Organization of African Unity also had a major role to play. Some key actions ascribed to by the states, included,

- “Formulating national policies on the various areas, which will define and underscore the specific cultural development objectives as well as the conditions and methods for their implementation”
- “Taking the necessary steps to promote cooperation for cultural development at both the Inter-African and international levels”
- “Ensuring cultural exchange and the development of cultural tourism.”<sup>24</sup>

#### **2.1.6 Conference of Ministers of Culture (1986-1993)**

The history of the cultural policies of Africa will be incomplete if one does not mention the major sessions of the Conference of Ministers of Culture convened under the auspices of the Organization of African Unity in Port Louis, Mauritius (1986), Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso (1988), Yaoundé, Cameroon (1990) and Cotonou, Benin (1993) respectively. An essential issue that each of these sessions tackled involved the bolstering of the cultural cooperation among the various African countries. The sessions also put forth recommendations intended to rectify this issue, recommendations such as establishing concrete initiatives like cultural festivals, sub-regional institutions and research centers. At the 1986 Conference in Port Louis, Mauritius, the conference formulated a Regional Cultural Development plan for the OAU<sup>25</sup>. It was to be a five-year plan implemented from 1991-1995; it wanted to achieve three main aims,

- “Adopt a mid-term plan for the cultural activities of the OAU with an integrated vision and a framework with a view to avoid fragmented efforts;”
- “Promote the creation of the African Cultural Common Market;”
- “Improve the cooperation with African and international partner institutions.”<sup>26</sup>

These conferences and the many expert meetings that took place from 1976 up until 2005, constituted a major landmark in the history of cultural policies in Africa. These documents and treaties formed the foundational basis for the cultural policy that is in place today.

## **2.2 African Union**

After the African Union replaced the Organization of African Unity in 2001, cultural policies in Africa got a new breath of life injected into them. The African Union in its Strategic Plan of Action emphasized the primacy of culture with the statement by naming culture as one of the forces that Africa can fall on to achieve its goal of “integrated, prosperous and peaceful Africa, driven by its own citizens and representing a dynamic force in the global arena.”<sup>27</sup> The strategic plan of action went further to highlight the potential for change that the various stakeholders in the cultural sector held, namely, youth, artists, associations, and many others. With the AU at the helm of affairs, culture and its ability to drive the development and integration process on the continent was given a central role. The African Union organized the First and Second Conference of Intellectuals in Africa and the Diaspora in Senegal and Brazil respectively. The AU in partnership with international institutions organized a series of ministerial conferences on culture and the Pan African Cultural congress, first, second and third editions. All in the quest to identify the key

challenges that the cultural policies of old faced and to chart a new path for the way forward in order to better harness culture for development.

### **2.2.1 Charter for African Cultural Renaissance**

From the various meetings and seminars organized in the first few years of the AU's existence emerged "The Charter of African Cultural Renaissance". The first AU Conference of African Ministers of Culture held in Nairobi, Kenya in 2005 adopted the charter and the Heads of State and Government of the African Union meeting in the 5<sup>th</sup> Ordinary Session in Khartoum, Sudan in 2006 endorsed the treaty. This Charter replaced the 1975 Cultural Charter of Africa; it did not however do away with the contents of the latter but rather reinforced the basic principles of the Cultural Charter and augmented it with new ideas in view of the rapid globalization sweeping the continent and its implications for African cultures. From its preamble, the Charter underscores the need to promote African cultural identity and diversity whilst increasing the interactions between the various cultures on the continent, to better aid in the "fight" against the negative effects of globalization.<sup>28</sup> The aims and the objectives of the Charter are, inter alia, to;

- "encourage cultural cooperation at the African and international levels for a better understanding among peoples"
- "strengthen the role of culture in promoting peace and good governance"
- "rehabilitate and preserve African cultural heritage"

The Conference of Ministers of Culture also revised the Dakar Plan of Action for the Development of Cultural Industries in Africa adopted in 1992, coming out with the Nairobi Plan of Action for

Cultural Industries in Africa.<sup>29</sup> The rapid changes happening in the cultural sector of Africa necessitated this revision, mainly due to advancements in information and communication technologies. The Nairobi Plan of Action rendered a thorough evaluation of the current trends of cultural industries and its challenges and opportunities. To help combat these challenges and preserve the African heritage and culture, the Plan of Action recommends a series of measures that would ensure the growth of indigenous African cultural industries all in hopes of establishing a common African Cultural market.<sup>30</sup> The Plan of Action also proposed a long list of indicators to gauge the progress of the various measures enumerated in the document.<sup>31</sup>

As with its preceding policies, the Charter of African Cultural Renaissance is plagued with the same ailments, the political apathy of African leaders and the lack of adequate funds. This has made the realization of the various checkpoints of the Charter very difficult.

### **2.3 Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS)**

The Treaty of Lagos established the Economic Community of West African states (ECOWAS) in 1975 with the aim of promoting cooperation and integration among its members leading to increased economic growth and development.<sup>32</sup> It is one of the stalwarts of the African Economic Community agenda, and its efforts at integration cover various array of sectors of the economy, such as transport, energy, agriculture, natural resources, commerce, monetary and financial issues, and culture.<sup>33</sup> The vision of ECOWAS is to create a borderless West Africa, which will afford the citizens of the individual member states access to the rich resources of the sub-region.<sup>34</sup> ECOWAS rebranded and adopted a revised treaty in 1993 with expanded powers and scope to reflect the changing tide in West Africa.<sup>35</sup>

### **2.3.1 Protocol on Cultural Framework Agreement**

In the Lagos Treaty, ECOWAS signified the importance of culture to the integration process by establishing a Social and Cultural Affairs Commission tasked with promoting the exchange of cultural activities pursuant to Article 49.<sup>36</sup> ECOWAS adopted its own version of a cultural policy in 1987 with the signing of the Protocol on Cultural Framework Agreement, in this document it laid out specific measures and process that would harness the power of culture for integration and development.<sup>37</sup> From the preamble, the protocol emphasized the importance of cultural co-operation among member states and it stood on the foundations laid out by the Cultural Charter of Africa, the Inter-Governmental conference on Cultural Policies in Africa, organized by UNESCO with the co-operation of the Organization for African Unity in Accra in 1975 and other international cultural policies.<sup>38</sup>

The main objectives of the protocol are:

- “Improvement of the populations’ standard of living and social progress through the development of creativity.”
- “Regional integration by means of community development which takes into account the specific socio-cultural realities and aspirations of the Member State population while at the same time responding to their fundamental needs and integrating their economic and cultural dimensions.”
- “The creation of Community awareness upheld by a sense of belonging to the same cultural Community that is founded on historical, linguistic and geo-political links. Affirming the presence of, and thus both safeguarding and promoting the specific cultural identities of

the Member States and of the Community they form, through international exchanges and the reinforcement of regional bilateral co-operation and the development of inter-regional co-operation.”<sup>39</sup>

The protocol spelt out the application areas<sup>40</sup> and one major area it prescribed was cultural exchanges. Pursuant to article 15, member states pledged to promote, inter alia, to;

- “bilateral cultural exchange between Member States and cultural diffusion within the Community,”
- “Meetings and exchanges between artists, Community leaders, producers, scientists, intellectuals, youths, women, cultural associations, workers, etc.”
- “The organization of cultural events in Member States, which will be of interest to several Member States at the same time, for example: shows, exhibitions, forums, fairs etc.”
- “The exchange of programs and cultural broadcasts between radio and television centers, media libraries and audio-visual production centers in the Member States.”<sup>41</sup>

## **2.4 Conclusion**

Culture is an indispensable portion of life, and as Africans, one of our biggest assets is our heritage and culture. With the right policy in place, the potential it has to develop the continent is immense. Philip Gbeho author of the national pledge of Ghana sum this up nicely when he wrote, “I promise to hold in high esteem. Our heritage, won for us through the blood and toil of our fathers” it bodes on us as citizens of Africa to hold in high esteem our heritage as Africans.<sup>42</sup>

The next chapter will look at the various strategies taken by the governments of Ghana and Nigeria to implement the objectives captured in Article 15 of the Cultural Protocol Agreement, the obstacles they face in implementation and shed some light on the prospects of cultural exchanges in terms of regional integration in West Africa.

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## **CHAPTER 3**

### **IMPLEMENTATION OF ARTICLE 15 OF THE CULTURAL PROTOCOL FRAMEWORK AGREEMENT OF ECOWAS BY GHANA AND NIGERIA**

#### **3.0 Introduction**

This chapter assesses the level of implementation of the Article 15 by the governments' of Ghana and Nigeria and the challenges that confront the two. The analysis is derived from secondary and primary data gathered from personal interviews undertaken by the researcher. The chapter is divided into four sections, a section for each country and finally a conclusion.

#### **3.1 Implementation of Article 15 by Ghana**

In 1957, Ghana became the first sub-Saharan country to gain independence and after the pomp and pageantry, the leaders of the new country enacted new laws and legislations for the populace. Emeritus Prof. J.H. Kwabena Nketia drew up a cultural policy document. This maiden document served as a reference point for successive governments of Ghana as well as the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO).<sup>1</sup>

The next stage in the development of the cultural policy of Ghana happened in 1983, when the erstwhile Provisional National Defense Council (PNDC) reviewed it and made some elaborate changes to the document. The establishment of the National Commission on Culture followed in 1990, this Commission was created to oversee the cultural life of Ghana<sup>2</sup>. After many consultations and deliberations, the government of Ghana adopted The Cultural Policy of Ghana in 2004.<sup>3</sup>

The Cultural Policy of Ghana is the guiding policy document for all the cultural activities in the country. It sets out the specific cultural objectives that the government wants to achieve and the required institutions upon whose shoulders implementation of the objectives rest<sup>4</sup>. The National Commission on Culture is the implementing organization of the cultural policy of Ghana; their main objective is to harness culture for development.<sup>5</sup>

The policy document recognizes the importance of culture to the material development of the people of Ghana, clearly stated in its introduction. The specific objectives of the policy are, inter alia, to maximize the capacity of the cultural sector to develop and promote the economic aspects of culture in order to enhance Ghana's image as a culture tourism destination and to promote the harmonization of African cultures in fulfillment of Ghana's objectives of promoting Pan-Africanism.<sup>6</sup>

As a state party to the ECOWAS Protocol on Cultural Framework Agreement, the government of Ghana through its Ministries and institutions implements the objectives of the Protocol. In the upcoming section, I have highlighted the measures Ghana has taken to actualize the objectives captured in the Protocol, specifically Article 15, with emphasis on objectives 1, 2, 4 and 6.

### **3.1.1 Objective One: Bilateral cultural exchange between member states and cultural diffusion within the community**

The first objective outlined by article 15 of the ECOWAS Protocol calls for the establishment of bilateral cultural exchanges among the member states and cultural diffusion within the ECOWAS community. The following section analyzes the extent of the bilateral cultural exchanges that exist between Ghana and the other ECOWAS member states.

Ghana and Burkina Faso in 1961 established a Permanent Joint Commission for Cooperation (PJCC); this kick started the long history of cooperation between the two countries. Its first session was held in Accra in July 1961, and it provided the platform for the two countries to collaborate on certain key issues, notably the construction of the Akosombo Dam.<sup>7</sup>

The PJCC over the years has been instrumental in creating avenues of cooperation between the two countries. The Border Demarcation Commission was a brainchild of the PJCC, and during the tenure of Flt Lt. Jerry John Rawlings, an inter-university cooperation protocol was penned between the universities of Ghana and Ouagadougou, which was intended to aid the exchange of students and faculty between the two universities.<sup>8</sup>

Since the turn of the millennium, the PJCC has gotten a breath of new life, with successive presidents being involved in bilateral consultations on cultural, economic and political issues. On the cultural front, the PJCC has established sister-city relations between selected towns and cities in Ghana and Burkina Faso respectively. This is to promote the agenda of a people-centric integration. Trade fairs and exhibitions are well attended by delegations from the two countries, with the aim of exchanging ideas.<sup>9</sup>

There has existed between Ghana and Mali a Permanent Joint Commission for Cooperation (PJCC) since 1977 and this Commission provides the framework for bilateral cultural exchanges between the two countries<sup>10</sup>. At the 11<sup>th</sup> session of the PJCC held in Accra in 2011, the two countries agreed to meet the next year that is 2012, to evaluate the level of implementation of the various areas.

Culture was one of such areas, the PJCC agreed to strengthen the already existing cooperation between the two countries. The areas they identified were, inter alia, exchange-training programs for women and cultural associations and the delegations of each country extend an invitation to

the cultural events present in their country, to the other. Artists from each country patronize the events of the other country; Ghanaian photographers display their photographs at the “Recontres de Bamako biennale Africaine de la photographie” in Mali and artisans from Mali exhibit their wares at the National Festival of Arts and Culture (NAFAC). The Pan-African Historical Theatre Festival (PANAFEST) in Ghana also draws a large crowd of both spectators and participants from Mali.<sup>11</sup>

Ghana has in place a bilateral cultural agreement with Nigeria. This is under the auspices of the Permanent Joint Commission for Cooperation (PJCC). At the 2017 session of the PJCC held in Ghana, the two countries agreed to and signed nine bilateral agreements, cultural cooperation was one of the agreements signed. The next session will be held in Abuja, Nigeria.<sup>12</sup>

As a part of its duties, the Ghanaian embassies and high Commissions in the various embassies organize cultural events. These events are intended to increase the respective countries awareness of Ghana culture as well as “sell” Ghana as a place for investment and tourism.<sup>13</sup>

Independence Day celebrations are the mainstay on the cultural events calendar of the various embassies and high Commissions. During these celebrations, diplomatic receptions are held for the diplomatic corps as well as some section of the public, Ghanaian foods, drinks and cultural dances are on full display during this reception.<sup>14</sup>

Other events that normally take place are cultural fairs and exhibitions, during the Ghana at 50 independence celebrations in Togo, the cultural group “Abibigromma” was invited to display to the people of Togo the rich culture of Ghana. This afforded the group the opportunity to meet and interact with their Togolese counterparts.<sup>15</sup>

I must reiterate that Ghana has bilateral agreements with almost all of the West African states but the above listed agreements are the only bilateral cultural agreements that Ghana has in place as of now. This leaves a lot to be desired in the implementation of the objective one of article 15 by the Ghana government.

### **3.1.2 Objective Two: Meetings and exchanges between artist, community leaders, youth, among others**

Ghana has been a destination for major conferences and meetings, of regional scope, ever since it gained independence in 1957, mention must be made of a few of these meetings and Conferences, inter alia, the All African Peoples Conference held in 1958 and the Intergovernmental Conference on Cultural Policies of Africa of 1975. This section will look at the various meetings and Conferences that have taken place under the auspices of the government of Ghana, in accordance with article 15, objective two of the ECOWAS Cultural Protocol.

In 2007, the government of Ghana played host to the African Road Safety Conference organized in partnership with the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA) and the World Health Organization (WHO). This Conference brought together over 300 delegates from many African countries as well as international organizations such as the African Union Commission and the Sub-Saharan African Transport Policy Program.<sup>16</sup>

The objective of the Conference was to review the road safety situation in African countries and to proffer some recommended solutions to the challenges the nations face<sup>17</sup>. The Conference was a highly successful one, well patronized and the resolutions passed served as foundational references for the road safety laws in many African countries today.

The government of Ghana also co-sponsored the organization of the Conference on War-Affected Children in West Africa in 2000. The participants of the Conference, drawn from all the ECOWAS member states, at the conclusion of the event, adopted an action plan that sought to alleviate the plight of the children in the conflict areas of West Africa.<sup>18</sup>

The action plan called for an immediate release of all children abducted during conflict and entreated all ECOWAS members to ratify the Optional Protocol to the Convention of the Rights of the Child on the Involvement of Children in Armed Conflict. According to the Canadian Foreign Minister, Lloyd Axworthy, the Conference was a watershed moment in the history of conflict in Africa and showed that there were leaders on the African continent after all.<sup>19</sup>

The Ministry of Health of Ghana in consultation with the World Health Organization Regional Office for Africa (WHO-AFRO) hosted the first consultative meeting on, Alcohol, Smoking and Substance Involvement Screening Test (ASSIST) project in 2007<sup>20</sup>. This project was initiated to train a cadre of health workers who will use the tool for early detection of people at risk.<sup>21</sup>

The meeting in Ghana provided a platform for discussions to take place on the situation in the respective African countries of substance use as well as the status of the ASSIST implementation. The two-day meeting ended with a call, for effective documentation of the practices in each African country, the ASSIST Advisory Committee head, Dr. Raj Pal.<sup>22</sup>

The First Lady of Ghana, Mrs. Lordina Mahama in 2016, played host to the African First Ladies at a Conference on Sexual Health and Rights.<sup>23</sup> The Conference was under the theme ‘Realizing Demographic Dividend in Africa: the Critical Importance of Adolescents and Youth Sexual and Reproductive Health and Right’. In attendance were the First Ladies of the following African

countries, Kenya, Ethiopia, Mali, Cote D'Ivoire, Sierra Leone, Guinea Bissau, Burkina Faso, Chad, Sudan, Madagascar and Mozambique.<sup>24</sup>

The Conference had in attendance over 500 participants, drawn from the above listed countries and various international organizations. The Conference also formed part of a deliberate agenda of building regional dialogue among African countries on sexual health and reproductive rights. The Conference resulted in the launch of a Continental “All-In” Adolescent HIV Campaign.<sup>25</sup>

Another important meeting organized by the government of Ghana, was the third General Meeting of the Tuning Africa-Phase II held in 2016. The project formed part of the continued collaboration between African countries and the European Union and its major goal was to harmonize the African Higher Educational system. Delegates from over a 100 African universities took part in the 2-day workshop.<sup>26</sup>

The participants analyzed the implementation strategies being used by the various countries and the establishment of an African credit system was debated. The meeting also saw the participation of the students and the institution of a Symposium on Research and Good Practices in competence-based student-centered approaches in higher education.<sup>27</sup>

Finally, the G20 Compact with Africa (CWA) held its first meeting in Accra in September 2017. The Ministry of Finance of Ghana and the African Center for Economic Transformation (ACET) jointly organized it. The Finance Ministers from seven African countries— Ghana, Côte d'Ivoire, Ethiopia, Morocco, Rwanda, Senegal, and Tunisia were present.<sup>28</sup>

The meeting was to investigate the role the CWA could play in the socio-economic development of the African countries who had signed on to it. The ministers present called for action on the ground in order to boost private sector investment in the individual CWA country.<sup>29</sup>

This section endeavored to shed some light on the actions of the government of Ghana with respect to objective two of Article 15 of the ECOWAS Cultural Protocol. The impact the various meetings and conferences have on regional integration are immense, the host nations culture is on full display from the opening ceremonies to the food served participants down to the entertainment sessions of the meetings. This helps to expose participants to the culture of the host nation as well as help create social bonds between participants. These bonds form the basis for interactions in future. The above listed examples are a but a few of the various meetings that the government of Ghana has organized for youth, intellectuals, women and community leaders from the various west African countries.

### **3.1.3 Objective Four: The organization of cultural events in member states which will be of interest to several other member states at the same time.**

The National Festival of Arts and Culture (NAFAC) is a biennial culture event organized by the National Commission on Culture (NCC) of Ghana. It began as a small festival in Kumasi in the 1960s<sup>30</sup> and from that humble beginning; it has grown to become the biggest cultural event in Ghana. It serves as a platform for promoting national unity and integration, mostly through the highlighting of the cultural diversity of the people of Ghana and the rest of the African continent. The activities undertaken during the event include, inter alia, choral music night, international friendship night and performing arts night.<sup>31</sup>

NAFAC is held every two years in a different region in Ghana. This rotational idea is to enhance the cultural infrastructure in the various regions and give the individual cultural groups in the

respective regions a chance to display their culture to the visitors who throng every year to the NAFAC celebrations.<sup>32</sup> The festival also plays host to cultural troupes from across the West African sub-region and beyond. At the 2006 edition, the visitors gathered for the opening were treated to an impressive cultural display by a Burkinabe Cultural troupe.<sup>33</sup>

NAFAC serves the role of bridging the gaps between the many diverse cultural groupings in Ghana and it creates awareness about the rest of the countries in the sub-region and their culture. It provides an opportunity for people from many different parts of Ghana and Africa to meet and interact and of course, there is the added benefit of “selling” Ghanaian culture to the world. This makes NAFAC a great economic venture for the host region as well as Ghana as a whole.<sup>34</sup>

The government of Ghana in collaboration with the ECOWAS Commission organized the ECOWAS Cultural Carnival in 2008. The main aim of the event was to provide an avenue for the various ECOWAS member countries to put their rich cultures on display for all and sundry to see. It also served as an opportunity for the various countries to dialogue on the cultural integration agenda of ECOWAS.<sup>35</sup>

The theme for the event was “Living the ECOWAS spirit @ 30”. Under this theme, the event sought to promote the spirit of oneness amongst the various countries in the sub-region. The main activities undertaken during the carnival included, inter alia, traditional food fair, African fashion catwalk and street dance shows and jams.<sup>36</sup>

Another event of interest is the Ghana Paragliding Festival organized under the auspices of the Ghana Tourism Authority (GTA). It is the biggest paragliding event in West Africa. It attracts hundreds of Ghanaians and foreign tourists alike to the Kwahu area each year during Easter

celebrations. This 3-day event has transformed the Easter celebrations in Ghana into an international event full of spectacular aerial fun, ceremony and music.<sup>37</sup>

Since 2005, when the very first event took place, the Ghana Paragliding Festival has provided the international paragliding community an opportunity to experience Africa. The festival also influences positively the economy of the Kwahu area, with the increased number of visitors providing opportunities for local businesses.<sup>38</sup>

Another cultural event organized by the government of Ghana during the period under review was the African Choral Festival held in 2012. The Ghana Tourism Authority in collaboration with the Multimedia Group, Ministries of Tourism, Chieftaincy, and Culture, the Ghana Choral Music Foundation worked together to organize the event. It was on the theme, "Celebrating Culture through Choral Music".<sup>39</sup>

The groups in attendance were from the United States of America, Asia, Europe, Southern Africa, Nigeria, Liberia, Togo, Ivory Coast and host Ghana.<sup>40</sup> The aim of the organizers was to foster closer collaboration and cultural exchange among the participating groups.<sup>41</sup> The festival also helped to promote the local tourism industry as well as provide economic opportunities for the people of Ghana.<sup>42</sup>

The last event this section looks at is the Pan-African Historical Theatre Festival (PANAFEST); a biennial cultural event that seeks to promote unity and development of the continent of Africa. The government of Ghana instituted it in 1992, and since then it has grown to include participants from African, Caribbean and South American countries, as well as from Europe and the United States.<sup>43</sup>

The activities that happen during PANAFEST include, inter alia, durbar of chiefs, expo and candlelit emancipation vigil. This is complemented by performances in theatre, music and poetry.

The festival also includes tours to certain places relevant to the slave trade, such as the various castles and dungeons as well as the Slave River at Assin Manso.<sup>44</sup> PANAFEST is arguably the most prestigious and indeed the most relevant cultural event on the African continent.<sup>45</sup> The festival helps to reaffirm the common heritage of all peoples of West Africa and Africa and promotes the communal spirit needed for regional integration to take place.

The government of Ghana through its various Ministries, Departments and Agencies is working tirelessly to achieve the objective four of the Cultural Protocol of the ECOWAS. The events listed above are in no way exhaustive of the many events of regional scope that happen every year in Ghana.

#### **3.1.4 Objective six: The exchange of programs and cultural broadcasts between radio and television centers, media libraries and audio-visual production centers in member states.**

The final objective under review in this section is the exchange of audio and video broadcasts between Ghana and her sister ECOWAS countries. The following paragraphs will shed light on what is being done by the government in this regard.

According to an official at the National Commission on Culture, the government of Ghana does not have in place any strategy to implement the above objective. The absence of this is due to the lack of adequate funds for the implementation of the various agreements that are penned by the government. The official also cited the absence of commitment on the part of the government as a hindrance to the implementation.

There exist exchanges between Ghanaian and mostly Nigerian, production houses but these are mostly private collaborations and not government instituted. An employee of the Ghana

Broadcasting Corporation stated that the corporation had in place exchange agreements with other countries but none in the West African sub-region.<sup>46</sup>

### **3.1.5 Challenges of implementation faced by Ghana**

The government has taken many strides to achieve the stated objectives of Article 15, but as with any human institution, it has not been without its own share of challenges. This section looks at the obstacles that Ghana faces in the implementation of the objectives.

The very first challenge is that of inadequate funding. This problem plagues the implementation of almost every single objective. The organization of cultural events of regional scope and target, a key component of objective four, suffers greatly from this. The government of Ghana through its budgetary allocations is the main source of funding for the National Commission on Culture (NCC).<sup>47</sup>

This funding over the years has been both unreliable and insufficient. The money allocated for events sometimes is delayed, as was the case of the 2005 edition of the National Festival of Arts and Culture (NAFAC), which caused the event to be postponed to 2006. During the years that the funds are provided in a timely fashion, it is not enough to satisfy the requirements of the National Commission on Culture (NCC) and this greatly hampers the ability of the Commission to organize successful events.<sup>48</sup>

The governmental allocation is not the only source of funding; the NCC falls on the private sector, private individuals and some of the international organizations. These however are not enough, the funds gotten from the international organizations and other developmental partners of Ghana are

too far apart to make the desired impact year in year out. The private sector also shies away from sponsoring cultural events, mainly because cultural events are seen as irrelevant.<sup>49</sup>

The next challenge that Ghana faces is the language barrier that exists between it and the Francophone and Lusophone countries in ECOWAS. This huge gap in language between the ECOWAS members makes exchanges and meetings very difficult to organize. Understanding is very important in any intercultural dialogue and language facilitates communication, which in turn facilitates understanding.

According to an official at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Regional Integration, meetings between Ghana and the Francophone member states of ECOWAS are particularly hard to organize. Documents that are sent from the Francophone countries always arrive in French and these have to be translated before being forwarded to the relevant Ministry, Department or Agency (MDA), this is before the actual meeting.<sup>50</sup>

During the meeting, the lack of a common language of communication results in many misunderstandings. The meetings make use of translators in order to communicate and this becomes a problem when official treaties and protocols are to be signed since, legal terms do not always translate well in other languages. The amount of time spent during these meetings are also increased due to this, which in turn increase cost.<sup>51</sup>

Another challenge is the lack of political will to implement these objectives. For the objectives of any bilateral or multilateral agreement or protocol to be achieved, the political leadership of the country must be in full support of the objectives. This commitment has been lacking in the implementation of the objectives of Article 15.

In an interview with an official from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Regional Integration, he attested to the fact that culture as a part regional integration was very low on the governments' agenda as compared to the other areas of integration, namely, trade and infrastructure. This lack of interest in culture renders the attempts by the government to implement these objectives half-hearted and uninspiring.<sup>52</sup>

This is the bane of all the challenges that Ghana faces in implementing the said objectives. The MDAs do not pay as much attention to the area of culture as they do the other areas captured in regional integration policies. In bilateral agreements such as Permanent Joint Commission on Cooperation (PJCC), culture is conspicuously absent. Making it a “gray” area according to an official at the Ministry of Tourism, Arts and Culture.<sup>53</sup>

### **3.2 Implementation of Article 15 by Nigeria**

Nigeria is the most populous country in Africa, with an estimated population of over 190million and one of the most culturally diverse countries in the world. According to the Nigerian Statistical service, there are an estimated 250 ethnic groups living in Nigeria with as many as 350 linguistic groups with 50% of the population Islamic, 35% Christian and the remaining 15% being animists. The major ethnic groups in Nigeria are the Hausa-Fulani who are predominantly in the north, the Igbo who are predominantly in the southeast, and the Yoruba who are predominantly in the southwest.

The diversified cultural composition of the state called for a deliberate cultural policy by the government to harness this multiplicity of cultural groups for development and there was the need to promote peaceful cultural coexistence, which could only be achieved through the actions of the

federal government, state governments and other organizations in the country. The cultural policy was to be an instrument for the promotion of national identity and Nigerian unity, and cooperation among different Nigerian and African cultures.

The National Cultural Policy of Nigeria came into force in 1988 after intense deliberations between the federal government and the major stakeholders. This document first defined what culture was to the government and laid out major objectives that the policy sought to achieve. The implementing Agencies for the cultural policy are the Federal Ministry of Information and Culture, the National Council for Arts and Culture, Film Corporation of Nigeria among others. According to the policy, the promotion and development of culture is the exclusive responsibility of each Nigerian state, although the Federal Government finances and offers administrative support for culture to each state.<sup>54</sup>

As a signatory to the 1987 Cultural Protocol Framework Agreement, the government of Nigeria has implemented some measures to the attainment of the objectives captured in the Protocol. The main implementing Agencies of the protocol are the same as the implementing Agencies of the national cultural policy of Nigeria; this is mainly because the objectives of the Protocol have been streamlined into the objectives of the National Cultural Policy. Below we look at the aforementioned measures with emphasis on Article 15, objectives 1, 2, 4 & 6.

### **3.2.1 Objective One: Bilateral cultural exchange between member states and cultural diffusion within the community**

In accordance with the objective one of Article 15, the government of Nigeria has entered into some bilateral agreements with the other ECOWAS member states and this section will take a critical look at the level of bilateral cultural exchanges that exist.

Nigeria and Ghana have a Permanent Joint Commission on Cooperation (PJCC), which provides bilateral avenues for cooperation on all sectors of the economy. The PJCC resulted in the signing of cultural agreements between the two countries, out of this agreement has come many cultural exchanges and events.<sup>55</sup>

In 2013, the two countries collaborated to organize an expo on tourism and culture, in Accra. This event highlighted the tourism potential and the diverse culture that the two countries had to offer. It also helped to strengthen the cultural ties between the two countries. Mention must be made of the Ghana meets Naija music concert, this musical show brings together the artists from both countries to perform on one stage and it provides an avenue for the people of Ghana to become aware of the culture of Nigeria.<sup>56</sup>

Another area where Nigeria's culture is diffusing throughout Ghana is in religion. It is now commonplace to see churches of Nigerian origin in Ghanaian communities. Some examples include, inter alia, Synagogue of all Nations, Christ Embassy, and Living Faith (Winners Chapel).<sup>57</sup>

In light of the need for cultural diffusion among ECOWAS countries, the National Council of Arts and Culture (NCAC) of Nigeria offered the government of The Gambia a free stand at the African Arts and Crafts Expo (AFAC) newly christened as International Arts and Crafts Expo (INAC).<sup>58</sup>

This was to increase the awareness of the Nigerian people of The Gambian culture and arts. There are discussions ongoing about a possible youth cultural exchange between the two countries and according to the head of the NCAC, this exchange will help enhance the spirit of oneness that exists between the two countries.<sup>59</sup>

To aid in the cultural diffusion agenda of ECOWAS, the Nigerian embassies and High Commissions in the ECOWAS member states, organize independence celebrations to propagate the culture of Nigeria in their respective countries. This event affords the countries a chance to dialogue on certain issues pertaining to the socio-cultural ties between the two countries.

During the 53rd independence celebrations organized by the High Commission in Ghana, the Nigerian community put together a cultural expo at the Ghana International Trade Fair Centre. The event had on display cultural foods and dresses from the various states in Nigeria.<sup>60</sup>

The Nigerian embassy in Togo also organized a similar cultural event. They hosted the diplomatic corps and the public to a cocktail event at the Ambassador's residence, which also had on display drinks and food from Nigeria as well as cultural performances from traditional dance troupes.<sup>61</sup>

The biggest vehicle of cultural diffusion used by the Nigerian government is the film industry of Nigeria commonly known as Nollywood. The movies produced portrays the culture of the people of Nigeria and through the enormous distribution network all across the West African sub-region, the populace of other ECOWAS countries get to witness the culture of Nigeria.

The government of Nigeria has chalked some success in its pursuit of achieving the objective one of Article 15. That notwithstanding, the lack of bilateral cultural exchange programs with a majority of the ECOWAS countries serves as a big hindrance to the attainment of the objective

### **3.2.2 Objective two: Meetings and exchanges between artist, community leaders, youth, among others**

This section of the chapter looks at the measures that the Nigerian government has taken to accomplish the requirement of objective 2, which calls for the organization of meetings and exchanges between inter alia, workers, youths, women and leaders.

The first to be mentioned is the 16<sup>th</sup> Commonwealth Speakers and Presiding Officers Conference for the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA) Africa Region took place from 21-29 July 2017 in Abuja, Nigeria. The Conference brings together Speakers and Presiding Officers of National Parliaments of independent sovereign states of the Commonwealth. This Conference serves a forum for knowledge sharing by the leaders of the various parliaments in attendance.<sup>62</sup>

The Conference was well attended by the African members of the CPA, namely, the Speakers and Presiding Officers from the national parliaments of Nigeria, Botswana, Cameroon, Ghana, Kenya, Lesotho, Malawi, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, Rwanda, Seychelles, Sierra Leone, South Africa, Swaziland, Tanzania, Uganda and Zambia.<sup>63</sup>

Secondly, the government of Nigeria played host to the 8th African Regional Conference of the World Union of Catholic Women Organization in 2013. The Conference provided the women of Nigeria to meet and interact with women from other parts of Africa. The members from various Catholic Women Organization of the following countries: Burundi, Cameroon, Cote d'Ivoire, Guinea Conakry, Mali, Senegal, Togo, Tanzania and Nigeria the host country attended.<sup>64</sup>

The theme of the Conference was "Love in Action". Some major resolutions from the deliberations that took place included, inter alia, call on all women leaders to mentor and promote other women through creation of opportunities, a call to get all women involved in government through

education, sensitization and participation. They also resolved to promote the woman through education and solidarity to liberate herself from all cultural impediment that prevents her from attaining equal pedestal with her male folks.<sup>65</sup>

The Africa group of the Inter-Parliamentary Union in partnership with the National Assembly of Nigeria organized a Regional Conference of Young Parliamentarians of Africa in Abuja in 2017. The two-day event brought the young parliamentarians, from 15 African countries, together with leaders of State assemblies, youth parliaments, civil society organizations and international Agencies to work on the theme “Empowering youth: Enhancing political participation for more inclusive and peaceful societies.”<sup>66</sup>

The Conference called for the institution of mentorships programs and capacity-building activities as a way of strengthening the impact of young MPs in their respective countries. Cross-party youth caucuses and networks were highlighted as a key way for young MPs to consolidate their efforts and address issues of common concern. The Conference ended with a resolution made by the participants to convene again in 2/3 years’ time to evaluate the status of implementation of the agreed upon resolutions.<sup>67</sup>

The government of Nigeria were the hosts of the First Regional Conference on Internal Displacement in West Africa in 2006. This Conference was in partnership with the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General on the Human Rights of Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) and the Brookings Institution-University of Bern Project on Internal Displacement.<sup>68</sup>

The Conference was to deliberate on the IDP situation in West Africa, with the aim of finding an appropriate way of improving their welfare. The major participants in the Conference were national, regional, international, and non-governmental organizations as well as humanitarian practitioners, and policy makers. From the discussions that took place, some recommendations were proffered for all the actors in the IDP situation, national, regional and international.<sup>69</sup>

The Ministry of Interior of Nigeria, in collaboration with the ECOWAS Commission, organized a sub-regional ministerial meeting on herders-farmers conflicts prevalent in the West African sub-region. The meeting took place from 24-26 April 2018 at the ECOWAS Commission Abuja.<sup>70</sup>

The meeting sought to find solutions to the challenges posed by the recurrent conflicts between herders and farmers in the region. In attendance were two delegates from each ECOWAS state. The aim was to produce and adopt a coordinated regional approach in addressing the escalation of cases of conflicts between herders and farmers.<sup>71</sup>

The Federal Ministry of Environment in partnership with the African Youth Initiative Climate Change (AYICC) convened the third edition of the African Youth Conference on Climate Change (AfriYOCC) on the Theme: ‘‘Integrating African Youth in the Implementation of Nationally Determined Contributions: Trends and Prospects’’ in Abuja.<sup>72</sup>

This Conference provides the youth of Africa the chance to highlight their climate change projects, mitigations strategies and green initiatives. It also provided the platform for youth to lay a claim to the role they could play in the climate change discussions that regional and international organizations have been having.<sup>73</sup>

The Conference served as a way of enhancing dialogue among the youth and the international organizations involved in climate change. It also brought to the fore a level of understanding of

the dynamics and impacts of the Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) and possible entry points for youth.<sup>74</sup>

Nigeria as host of the meetings and conferences listed above put on full display the culture of the Nigeria. This was evident from the opening ceremonies, where indigenous groups put on impressive cultural displays all the way to the hotel accommodations, which are very “traditional” in setting and scope. This help to market Nigeria to the participants and as with all interactions between humans, bonds are formed. These bonds are not only restricted to the specific ministry or area of conference but to all other areas of the society. This positively influences the integration of the West African sub-region.

### **3.2.3 Objective four: The organization of cultural events in member states which will be of interest to several other member states at the same time.**

Under objective four of article 15 of the Cultural Protocol Framework Agreement of ECOWAS, member states are tasked with organizing cultural events that are regional in scope and target audience, some examples of these cultural events are, inter alia, shows, fairs and exhibitions. In this regard, the government of Nigeria organizes the Abuja Carnival every year in the city of Abuja.

The Abuja Carnival was established in 2005, under the auspices of the federal government of Nigeria; a culturally stimulating event that aims to highlight the cultural diversity evident among the many Nigerian ethnic groups as wells the cultures of peoples from all over Africa and around the world. The 36 states of Nigeria are afforded a chance to display the creative spirits of their indigenous populations and peoples from other countries around the world have the opportunity to partake in the activities that take place during the carnival.<sup>75</sup>

The activities of the Abuja Carnival are intended to promote dialogue and cross cultural understanding. Some of the activities include roadside shows, music, dances, skits, masquerade, and a durbar. The activities are heavily patronized with estimated 2million visitors every year. Making it an exemplary cultural event that other ECOWAS members can emulate.<sup>76</sup>

For the 2012 edition, over 14 countries participated, namely, Botswana, Cameroon, China, Cuba, Egypt, Ethiopia, Ghana, India, Namibia, Rwanda, Senegal, South Africa, Sudan, and Trinidad and Tobago. All these countries sent delegations to the carnival with their own culturally significant displays such as traditional dances and distinctive floats.<sup>77</sup>

The Abuja Carnival serves as a platform for interactions between the participants and the spectators. This facilitates cross-cultural integration since people are exposed to the cultures of other countries in the ECOWAS sub-region. This further increases the level of understanding of the cultures of the other countries that Nigerian people have. The Carnival also increases exponentially the number of tourists that visit Nigeria every year and it has helped the public image of West African culture around the world.

Another event organized by the government of Nigeria is African Arts and Crafts (AFAC) Expo. The National Council for Arts and Culture (NCAC) created this event in 2008, as a way of displaying the artistic creativity and cultural diversity of Nigeria and the African continent as a whole. It features cultural stands and displays from on an average 15 African countries, 25 Nigerian states and over 200 non-governmental organizations every year. Participants from the countries and the exhibitors in attendance put their unique cultural identities on full display at the expo. This helps to create cross-cultural awareness of the people who visit AFAC each year.<sup>78</sup>

“AFAC is a marketplace for all things crafts and arts, such as fabrics, leather and souvenirs from Nigeria as well as other African countries”, according to Chief Segun Runsewe, director-general of the NCAC. He further asserts that it is a platform for producers of arts and crafts, financial sector operators as well as relevant government Agencies to brainstorm on growing and promoting the sector.<sup>79</sup> AFAC expo is now one of the biggest exhibitions in the West African sub-region, attracting tens of thousands of visitors every year. This serves as a catalyst for the tourism and hospitality industry.

The next measure that the government of Nigeria has taken to achieve objective four is the hosting of the All Africa Music Awards, AFRIMA. The government of Nigeria bid and successfully won the hosting rights to the first three AFRIMA-AFRICAN Awards, running from 2014-2016, and because of the successes of the first three shows, it was awarded the rights to host the next three.<sup>80</sup>

The AFRIMA-AFRICAN Awards show is an annual music fest that seeks to be an avenue to highlight, celebrate, promote and preserve the rich African cultural heritage and values. It is a deliberate attempt by the organizers to recognize, award, promote and preserve Africa’s rich music culture. The African Union and the government of Nigeria supports it, as hosts.<sup>81</sup>

AFRIMA is well on its way to becoming the biggest music event in Africa. The award show seeks to unite the people of Africa in the celebration of excellence in African music and provide a chance for musicians and others to meet and interact. This dialogue will form the basis for cross-cultural understanding that would have otherwise been difficult to achieve.

The Nigerian government is indeed making strides to achieve objective four of Article 15 and the individual state governments are working tirelessly to making sure cultural events become a mainstay of the activities calendar of Nigeria also. One of such state initiatives is the All-Nigerian

Festival of Lagos State that took place in April 2018<sup>82</sup>. The other 35 other states also have annual festivals that the serve the same purpose.

#### **3.2.4 Objective six: The exchange of programs and cultural broadcasts between radio and television centers, media libraries and audio-visual production centers in member states.**

In this section, I endeavor to bring to the fore the strategies that the government of Nigeria is using to implement objective six of Article 15. This objective calls for the exchange of programs and cultural broadcasts between radio and television centers.

The many strategy used was the establishment of the Zuma Film Festival (ZUFF) this biennial event brings together filmmakers from Nigeria and their counterparts from across the sub-region. The event features films from over 50 countries from Africa, Asia, Europe as well as Nigerians in the diaspora.<sup>83</sup>

The participating countries send in their film submissions and these films are screened to the audience during ZUFF. ZUFF provides a platform for people to enjoy a plethora of films and deliberate on co-production opportunities.<sup>84</sup>

The government of Nigeria also participates in regional film festivals such as the Pan African Film and Television Festival of Ouagadougou (FESPACO), where Nigerian films are screened to an increasingly global audience.<sup>85</sup>

The exchanges that exist between production houses in Nigerian and their counterparts in the other ECOWAS countries is based on private initiative and have no governmental strategy backing it. The cooperation transcends just exchange of movies to co-production of movies.

### **3.2.5 Challenges of implementation faced by Nigeria**

The implementation of the objectives has not been without its own challenges, and in this section, I will analyze the various challenges that the government of Nigeria faces in its quest to achieving the objectives of Article 15.

First, the lack of public support of the various initiatives undertaken by the government is a huge obstacle. The people have to buy into the idea of any strategy that is proposed, without this much-needed support every initiative will fail.

Taking the Abuja Carnival as an example, a critical review of the documents and news reports from the Federal Ministry of Information and Culture shows that the number of participants has dwindled to an abysmal level. The Nigerian states who are the major components of the event shun the event now, only six states out of the 36 Nigerian states participated in the last edition of the carnival.<sup>86</sup>

According to some residents of Abuja, the economic situation in Nigeria leaves nothing for them to celebrate and such they would not be part of carnival. The foreign countries who grace the occasion have also started staying away citing the increasingly volatile security situation as the reason for this change in attitude.<sup>87</sup>

Just like almost all initiatives in Africa, the strategies being implemented suffer greatly from inadequate financial support. The government of Nigeria is the main sponsor of the events and activities being undertaken to achieve objectives 1, 2, 4 and 6 of Article 15, this puts a serious strain on the finances of the state. It also means that the amount of money that each activity will get would be significantly smaller.

The private sector has yet to become major players in sponsoring the events of the government. Logistical and funding issues caused the 2017 edition of the Abuja Carnival to be cancelled. The African Arts and Crafts expo has suffered greatly due to insufficient funds. This has affected the publicity and quality of event being organized.<sup>88</sup>

Another obstacle that Nigeria faces is the inevitable language barrier that exists between the Francophone, Anglophone and Lusophone countries of ECOWAS. It has made the exchange and meetings of youth, women and leaders very hard. While some aspects of the objectives, such as music, fashion and arts, are easily transmitted, the others are not so easy to transmit without a working language. Meetings organized by Nigeria become more costly due to the need to employ translators.<sup>89</sup>

### **3.3 CONCLUSION**

From the above sections, it can be deduced that the governments of Ghana and Nigeria have gone to great lengths to achieve the objectives of Article 15. The implementation has been fraught with challenges, from inadequate funds through to dwindling political will. The next chapter will proffer some recommendations as to how the governments of Ghana and Nigeria and in a larger context the ECOWAS member states can overcome these challenges and better enhance their cultural integration agenda.

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## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

#### **4.0 Introduction**

The study set out to highlight the role culture plays in regional integration in Africa and West Africa, as well as shine light on the level of implementation of the ECOWAS Cultural Protocol Framework Agreement; measures and challenges, using Ghana and Nigeria as case studies. This chapter presents the findings based on the achieved objectives of the study, draws conclusion from the findings and offers some recommendations for action.

#### **4.1 Summary of Findings**

Culture is an indispensable part of the heritage of Africa and its people. Dating all the way back to the Bantu migration, culture has been integral to inter-societal relations and cooperation. In today's balkanized Africa, culture has the power to transcend these artificial borders. Culturally similar groups exist in multiple countries and these groups provide the impetus needed for regional integration to take place. The Ewes of Ghana-Togo, Yoruba of Benin-Nigeria are a few examples of these groups.

Culture provides a platform for dialogue and forms a basis for understanding, which other areas of the economy cannot; this is fueled by the existence of similar languages, customs and the trade in cultural significant goods. Culture indeed plays a pivotal role in the regional integration agenda of Africa and West Africa; this is vividly portrayed in the treaties and various agreements that have been penned by the various regional integration bodies.

#### **4.1.1 Ghana**

The government of Ghana has taken major strides to achieve the objectives of the ECOWAS Cultural Protocol Framework Agreement. The National Commission on Culture was established; post the Protocol, to oversee the implementation of the objectives of the Protocol. The Cultural Policy of Ghana also incorporated the Protocol into its list of main objectives. Key among these objectives was the call for ‘Pan-Africanism’. Ghana through the various governmental institutions organizes cultural events; these events have participants and spectators attending from all over the sub-region. Examples are, inter alia, the ECOWAS Cultural Carnival and the National Festival of Arts and Culture.

The study also found that, out of the 15 ECOWAS states, the government of Ghana has bilateral cultural agreements with only three states, namely: Burkina Faso, Mali and Nigeria. This is in sharp contrast to the number of bilateral agreements that exist between Ghana and the ECOWAS states in the areas of trade, economy, peace and security among others. In the area of cultural diffusion, the missions and embassies of Ghana in the various countries in West Africa organize cultural events and activities that help propagate the culture of Ghana to the indigenes of the respective countries. Independence Day celebrations organized by the embassies and missions are a vivid example of this; cultural troupes such as Abibigromma are invited to the respective country to display the rich cultural diversity of Ghana. Treating the audiences to authentic Ghanaian dances from all the regions of Ghana, depicting the folklore of the people as wells musicals and dramatic poetry recitals. Also on display are various Ghanaian foods for the audiences to sample, as a result of this, Ghanaian themed restaurants and Ghanaian foods are a in high demand at functions in some ECOWAS countries, namely Togo, Liberia, among others.

Ghana also organizes meetings and conferences for women, youth, and community leaders among others from the various countries in the sub region. These meetings help the various countries exchange ideas and thoughts about a wide array of issues from health, security to education and it also serves as a catalyst for continual interactions between the various countries in the sub region. In the area of exchange of cultural broadcasts between media centers in the various ECOWAS countries, no governmental initiative was in place between the ECOWAS member states and Ghana, the exchanges between production houses existed mainly as initiatives by private organizations and individuals.

A major obstacle that Ghana faced in implementing the objectives was the lack of adequate funds, which greatly hindered the organization of the cultural activities. Because of this, some events became one-time events, whilst the scale and scope of others diminished significantly. In 2013, the government of Ghana allocated GHC 18, 585,375 to the Ministry of Tourism, Culture, Creative Arts, as compared to the GHC61, 229, 880 allocated to the Ministry of Employment, and Labor Relations as well as the GHC41, 670, 827 allocated to the Ministry of Information.<sup>1</sup> Out of the GHC 18, 585,375 allocation, the National Commission on Culture (NCC) received 7.6%, which amounted to GHC1, 413, 000, for its operations.<sup>2</sup> The NCC is the main implementing body of the cultural policy of Ghana, with centers in all the 10 regions of Ghana as well as regional, national and international events. This amount was woefully inadequate and not forgetting the wage bill of the NCC which was GHC700, 000.<sup>3</sup>

The lack of political will and commitment on the part of government officials affected the implementation process. Culture as a part of regional integration is regarded as a “gray” area among the political elite. The leadership of the government place emphasis on the other forms of

integration to the detriment of the cultural integration agenda, which also affects the implementation of the cultural protocol.

#### **4.1.2 Nigeria**

Nigeria enacted a cultural policy, barely a year after the ECOWAS Cultural Protocol was adopted, in 1988. This policy document stipulated the various institutions of the federal and states' governments, responsible for implementing the objectives of the policy as well as other cultural agreements acceded to by Nigeria. Nigeria also has in place very few bilateral cultural agreements with the various ECOWAS member states and of the few in existence; implementation is not very high on the agenda of the government, mainly attributed to the lack of commitment to the various agreements in place by the political leadership.

The embassies and missions of Nigeria around the ECOWAS sub-region put on shows and expos that serve as a forum for interactions between the local population and some cultural traits of Nigeria; music, dance and foods are mostly on display during these events. Flowing from these displays, Nigerian music and movies have taken over the entertainment landscape of the West African sub-region countries like Ghana play host to a myriad of events that are headlined by Nigerian entertainers, examples are Ghana meets Naija and a night of a 1000 laughs. Mention must be made of the recent Confederation of African Football (CAF) Awards night held in Ghana but headlined by Nigerian artistes. The Federal government has also made cultural events a mainstay on the calendar in Nigeria; the events that take place yearly include, inter alia, the Abuja Carnival and the African Arts and Crafts Expo. These events provide an opportunity for the participants to interact and create bonds; participants are from all over the ECOWAS sub-region and beyond.

They also afforded the various ECOWAS states the chance to display their culture to a large variety of people. These interactions formed the basis of relations between states.

Nigeria is a host to numerous meetings; the federal government, the individual states and the international agencies domiciled in Nigeria, organizes these forums. The scope of these meetings cut across, from women to youth to elected officials. The presence of the ECOWAS Commission in Nigeria also plays a major part of these meetings being organized in Nigeria. These meetings act as a source of valuable public relations for the government of Nigeria. Participants from across the sub region also teach the Nigerian participants some cultural practices from their respective countries. This goes a long way to influence the integration agenda of ECOWAS.

The private sector is heavily invested in the exchange of both broadcasts as well as personnel in the media industry but unfortunately, the government of Nigeria has no policy to facilitate this key objective of Article 15. The actions taken involve other countries and not those of West African countries. A clear example is the film co-production agreement between Nigeria and France that was penned in June 2018.

A major obstacle that Nigeria faces in implementation is the lack of popular public support. Cultural policies due to their people centric nature are very dependent on the support of the indigenes of the countries of implementation. Due to the downward spiral of the economic fortunes of Nigeria coupled with an ever-worsening security situation, the people are reluctant to get on board and partake in any cultural initiatives. The participants from outside Nigeria also stay away citing security reasons.

Another challenge is the inadequate funding allocated to the cultural sector to support its programs and policies. Huge financial commitments is required from the Federal government and frankly,

the government is lacking in both resources and in desire. The political elite do not accord much importance to the cultural aspects of regional integration.

#### **4.2 Conclusions**

Culture indeed plays a pivotal role in regional integration. Regional integration bodies feature it prominently in their treaties and various agreements. The governments of Ghana and Nigeria have taken major steps to implement the objectives of Article 15 of the ECOWAS Cultural Protocol Agreement. These measures include the organization of festivals and the use of their missions abroad as points for cultural diffusion in the sub-region. These measures have been fraught with challenges however, mainly financial and linguistic in nature. Culture is the glue that binds all Africans together and ECOWAS member states need to pay more attention to the cultural sector and implement the ECOWAS Cultural Protocol with zeal and enthusiasm.

#### **4.3 Recommendations**

A thorough analysis of the findings of this study, together with the works of other regional integration scholars informs the following recommendations:

Governments should pursue intensely a scheme of getting private partnerships for the cultural sector. These Public-Private Partnerships will go a long way in alleviating the funding plight of the cultural industry.

There is the need to garner public support for the cultural initiatives; this can be done through marketing, advertisement of the events and the sensitization of the public about the benefits of the initiatives and events.

There should also be regular evaluations of the initiatives undertaken, these evaluations will help the government and ECOWAS ascertain the impact the protocol is having on the country. These evaluations should be codified at the end of the year in the annual reports of the implementing ministry, department or agency of state.

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