**TERRORISM RISKS AND THREATS ASSESSMENT IN WEST AFRICA:
ANALYZING ECOWAS EARLY WARNING SYSTEM**

Tetede Babatunde Francois AKILATAN

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Tetede Babatunde Francois AKILATAN

T.C.

Eskişehir Osmangazi University

Institute of Social Sciences

Department of International Relations

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T.C.

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This study titled 'Terrorism Risks and Threats Assessment: Analyzing ECOWAS Early Warning System' prepared by Tetede Babatunde Francois Akilatan is found to be successful after the defense exam conducted on June 16, 2021 in accordance with the related article of the Graduate Education and Training Regulation of Eskisehir Osmangazi University's Institute of Social Sciences. The thesis has accordingly been accepted by the under listed Jury members and the Department of International Relations as Thesis.

Head of Department: Doç. Dr. Ramazan ERDAĞ

Dr. Cansu ATILGAN PAZVANTOĞLU

(Supervisor)

Dr. Tamer KAŞIKÇI

(Jury Member)

Dr. Hazar VURAL JANE

(Jury Member)

Approved:

……/……/ 2021

Director of Institute

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ABSTRACT

TERRORISM RISKS AND THREATS ASSESSMENT: ANALYZING ECOWAS EARLY WARNING SYSTEM

AKILATAN, Tetede Babatunde Francois

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Department of International Relations

Supervisor: Dr. Cansu ATILGAN PAZVANTOĞLU

Otherwise known as ECOWAS, the Economic Community of West African States is a regional institution initiated on 28 May 1975 by 15 west African countries whose essential aim is to promote economic integration within the member states and tackle the region-related geopolitical issues in a common way. The ECOWAS' member states have been encountering various challenges including terrorism. Terrorism is a major security threat to people within the member states. In this regard, it is common understanding that state or any supranational institution needs to continuously assess the risk and the threat of terrorism for the purpose of being able to prevent any potential terrorist incident on its territory. Although ECOWAS has a standing counterterrorism strategy, it lacks a terrorism risk and threat assessment approach which could still help anticipate future terrorist activities that might endanger the national security of each and all the member states. This issue constitues the focus of the present study whose principal aim is to offer an analysis of the ECOWAS Early Warning and Response Network (ECOWARN) by way of an assessment of the existent, emerging and potential terrorism risks and threats in Nigeria and Mali–the two most impacted countries within ECOWAS region. As such, terrorism risks and threats posed by Boko Haram in Nigeria and Jamaat Nusrat al-Islam wal-Muslimin in Mali were assessed. The assessment was carried out using the TRAM methodology as the analytical framework of the research. However, the TRAM methodology *per se* does not constitute a substitute to the methodological

approach of this study. Instead, the findings of this study were made possible through the exploration of a qualitative approach based typically on an analytical and descriptive research thanks to secondary data such as highlights, incident reports, policy briefs and other necessary data related to the security issues in the ECOWAS region and collected from the ECOWAS Commission's website. The secondary data were also collected from academic books, papers published in academic journals, newspaper articles, etc. As a result, it has been found out that ECOWARN's focus on inter-state conflict prevention over the prevention of terrorism risk and threat is a weak point to ECOWAS' ability to effectively guard against terrorism in West Africa in line with the challenges encountered by its counterterrorism strategy and the tremendous insights and benefits that early warning systems provide in counterterrorism field. To address this challenge, the study has come up with the way ECOWARN can be reoriented in a bid to facilitate the assessment and mitigation of terrorism risks and threats in the ECOWAS' member states.

ÖZET

BATI AFRİKA'DA TERÖRİZM RİSKLERİ VE TEHDİTLERİN DEĞERLENDİRİLMESİ: ECOWAS ERKEN UYARİ SİSTEMİNİN İNCELENMESİ

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Danışman: Dr. Öğr. Üyesi Cansu ATILGAN PAZVANTOĞLU

Batı Afrika Devletleri Ekonomik Topluluğu (ECOWAS), üye devletleri arasında ekonomik entegrasyonu teşvik etmek ve bölgeyle ilgili jeopolitik sorunları ortak bir şekilde ele almak amacıyla 15 Batı Afrika ülkesi tarafından 28 Mayıs 1975'te kurulan bölgesel bir organizasyondur. ECOWAS'ın üye devletleri, terörizm dahil çeşitli zorluklarla karşılaşmaktadır. Terörizm, üye devletlerdeki insanların güvenliği için büyük bir tehdit oluşturmaktadır. Bu bağlamda, devletin veya herhangi bir uluslarüstü kurumun, kendi topraklarındaki herhangi bir potansiyel terör olayına karşı korunabilmek için sürekli olarak terörizm riskini ve tehdidini değerlendirmesi gerektiği yaygın bir anlayıştır. ECOWAS daimi bir terörle mücadele stratejisi olmasına rağmen, her bir üye devletin ulusal güvenliğini tehlikeye atabilecek gelecekteki terörist faaliyetleri tahmin etmeye yardımcı olabilecek bir terör riski ve tehdit değerlendirme yaklaşımından yoksundur. Bu konu, temel amacı ECOWAS Erken Uyarı ve Müdahale Ağı'nın Nijerya ve Mali'deki mevcut, ortaya çıkan ve potansiyel terörizm riskleri ve tehditlerinin değerlendirilmesi yoluyla bir analizini sunmak olan bu çalışmanın odak noktasını oluşturmaktadır. Bu itibarla Nijerya'da Boko Haram ve Mali'de 'Jamaat Nusrat al-Islam wal-Muslimin' tarafından oluşturulan terör riskleri ve tehditleri değerlendirilmiştir. Değerlendirme, araştırmanın analitik çerçevesi olarak Terörizm Risk Değerlendirmesi ve Yönetimi (TRAM) metodolojisi kullanılarak gerçekleştirildi. Bununla birlikte, TRAM metodolojisi kendi başına bu çalışmanın metodolojik yaklaşımının yerini tutmaz.

Bunun yerine, bu çalışmanın bulguları, ECOWAS Komisyonu'ndan çevrimiçi olarak erişilebilen önemli noktalar, olay raporları ve politika bilgileri gibi ikincil veriler sayesinde tipik olarak analitik ve tanımlayıcı bir araştırmaya dayanan nitel bir yaklaşımın araştırılmasıyla mümkün hale getirildi. ECOWAS bölgesindeki güvenlik konuları ile ilgili diğer gerekli veriler, akademik kitaplar, akademik dergilerde yayınlanan makaleler, gazete makaleleri vb. toplanmıştır. Sonuç olarak, ECOWAS Erken Uyarı ve Müdahale Ağı'nın terörizm riskinin ve tehdidinin önlenmesi yerine daha çok devletler arası çatışmanın önlenmesine odaklanmasının, ECOWAS'ın terörle mücadele stratejisinin karşılaştığı zorluklar ve erken uyarı sistemlerinin terörle mücadele alanındaki muazzam faydaları doğrultusunda Batı Afrika'da terörizme karşı etkin bir şekilde korunma yeteneği açısından zayıf bir nokta olduğu ortaya çıkmıştır. Bu zorluğun üstesinden gelmek için, çalışma ECOWARN'ın ECOWAS'ın üye devletlerinde terörizm risklerinin ve tehditlerinin değerlendirilmesini ve azaltılmasını kolaylaştırmak için bir öneriyle yeniden yönlendirilebileceğini ortaya koymuştur.

Anahtar kelimeler: ECOWAS, ECOWARN, Batı Afrika, Erken Uyarı Sistemi, Terörizm Riski ve Tehdit Değerlendirmesi, TRAM metodolojisi.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATION

AE	: Attack Elasticity
AFISMA	: African-led International Support Mission to Mali
AU	: African Union
ECOCTB	: ECOWAS Counter-Terrorism Coordination Bureau
ECOLIST	: ECOWAS Black List of Terrorist and Criminal Networks
ECOWAS	: Economic Community of West African States
ECOWARN	: ECOWAS Early Warning and Response Network
ECOWARRANT	: ECOWAS Arrest Warrant
ECTS	: ECOWAS Counter-Terrorism Strategy
EWERS-PVE	: Early Warning and Early Response System for the Prevention of Violent Extremism
TRAM	: Terrorism Risk Assessment and Management
UN	: United Nations
CAFs	: Critical Asset Factors
CBRN	: Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear
CEWS	: Continental Early Warning System
COVID-19	: Coronavirus Disease 2019
Ci	: Consequence of a scenario
C&P	: Consequences and Associated Probabilities
C&U	: Consequences and Uncertainty
CS	: Causal Scenario
CSOs	: Civil Society Organizations
NRC	: National Research Council
DHS	: United States Department of Homeland Security
DOS	: United States Department of State
EC	: Expected Consequences
EU	: Expected Utility
EW	: Early Warning
GTD	: Global Terrorism Database
GTI	: Global Terrorism Index
INSEP	: Indonesian Institute for Society Empowerment

IRA	: Irish Republican Army
ISWAP	: Islamic State West African Province
JNIM	: Jamaat Nusrat al-Islam wal-Muslimin
LASD	: Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department
LCE	: Large Conventional Explosive
MINUSMA	: United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali
MNJTF	: Multinational Joint Task Force
NPD	: National Preparedness Directorate
NSTC	: National Science and Technology Council
OSC	: Operation Safe Corridor
P*i*	: Probability of a scenario
PO	: Affected Population
RCE	: Small Conventional Explosive
RECs	: Regional Economic Communities
RPG	: Rocket-Propelled Grenade
SAIC	: Science Applications International Corporation
SALWs	: Small Arms and Light Weapons
S*i*	: Scenario
START	: National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism
TA	: Target Attractiveness
TEW	: Terrorism Early Warning Group
TRITIX	: Terrorism Risk and Threat Index
TV	: Target Value
UNSC	: United Nations Security Council
WANEP	: West Africa Network for Peace-building
WACSOF	: West African Civil Society Forum
WMD	: Weapons of Mass Destruction

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INTRODUCTION

ECOWAS is a regional economic and political organization that is made up of fifteen (15) states across the West Africa. It was established in 1975 for the promotion of market integration within the fifteen countries which are Nigeria, Burkina-Faso, Benin, Ghana, Cote d'Ivoire, Guinea, The Gambia, Cabo Verde, Guinea-Bissau, Togo, Niger, Senegal, Liberia, Sierra Leone, and Mali. Its vision was mainly to eliminate among its member states tariff and non-tariff barriers to lay foundation for an Economic Union formation. Promoting cooperation and development almost in all economic activities fields–such as transport, industry, energy, telecommunications, agriculture, commerce, natural resources, social and cultural concerns, financial and monetary questions, and so on–has always been the community's leitmotifs in order to better the living conditions of its citizens, increase economic sustainability, strengthen cooperation within its member states, and make valuable contribution to the development of African continent. As a result of some changes that have occurred over time and space in its challenges especially the dynamics of international system with the passing of Cold War and the spread of the related crisis throughout the region, the community has extended its mandate and showed commitments in security issues. These commitments have begun in 1999 with the establishment of the ECOWAS Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management, Resolution, Peacekeeping and Security whose revised Treaty and the Protocol's article 58 has set-up an observation system for peace and security known as ECOWAS Early Warning and Response Network (ECOWARN).

Established at ECOWAS Commission in Abuja, ECOWARN is an observation system made up of four zonal bureaus established in The Gambia (Banjul), Benin (Cotonou), Burkina-Faso (Ouagadougou), and Liberia (Monrovia). It purposely collects, compiles, archives, manages, processes and shares information related to human security issues whose analysis enables the community to back its member states' policymaking ability and real-time preventive response through sound recommendations, support in the management of delicate conflict and instability situations, etc. The Early Warning concept appeared in the national military intelligence sector for the first time during the Cold War thus aiming at enhancing the prediction capacity of potential attacks. The Early Warning framework was even embedded in the United Nations (UN) system to predict natural disasters. It has

evolved and been used as an instrument against armed conflict and lethal violence. This use of early warning system for the purpose of human security promotion and violent conflict prevention has been effectively institutionalized in the UN system in 1992 as Boutros Boutros Ghali, its then Secretary General through "*An Agenda for Peace*" established a connection between human security concerns and emerging security threats of post-Cold War to an effective early warning process and a pre-emptive response. Moreover, he raised awareness on the necessity of early warning system for the purpose of addressing threats or risks related to the environment, natural disasters, epidemics, famine, nuclear accidents, and social unrests.

Thus, it is postulated within the scope of this study that the ECOWAS Early Warning System is more focused on armed conflict prevention with a likely disregard of any effort to assess terrorism risks and threats. Thus, it is no secret that during the past decade terrorist acts in the member states have proven the severity of terrorism menace to West Africa. The ECOWAS region has experienced episodes of terrorist acts that majorly consist of kidnapping, hijacking, hostage-taking, explosive bombing, assassinations, gruesome murders, etc. These trends have alarmed the Heads of States and Governments of the community to commonly and firmly address these threats. As a matter of response, the community has *inter alia* adopted a counter-terrorism strategy whose approach focuses on three grand pillars such as preventing terrorist activities from happening, prosecuting the individuals found guilty of terrorism, and repairing any harm caused by terrorist acts to the society. Despite these efforts to curb terrorism, ECOWARN lacks a comprehensive approach to assess terrorism risks and threats, and anticipate future developments that may endanger the security of its member states.

With regard to this problem, the following central question guides this study: How does ECOWARN's lack of focus on terrorism risk and threat assessment constitute a gap to ECOWAS' ability to effectively and efficiently guard against terrorist acts ? In order to better understand this question, the following sub-questions are critically important: What are the terrorism risk factors within ECOWAS region ? How can West Africa-related terrorism risk and threat be thoroughly assessed? How does failing to assess these risk and threat jeopardize ECOWAS' counterterrorism instruments ? How can ECOWARN be reoriented in a manner that fosters the assessment and mitigation of terrorism risk and threat within ECOWAS region ?

In line with these questions, the present study will be focused on the assumption that the expansion of ECOWARN's mandates to go beyond the prevention of conflicts and thus include a systemic assessment of terrorism risk and threat is crucial to the effective prevention of terrorist incidents in the ECOWAS region. In keeping with this postulation, the central aim of this thesis is to analyze ECOWAS Early Warning System through an assessment of the existent, emerging and potential terrorism risk and threat in the most affected countries in ECOWAS region such as Nigeria and Mali. That is, this study is first and foremost an assessment of terrorism risk and threat. The terrorism risk and threat assessment can help states or organizations strengthen their capacity in anticipating the terror groups' behaviors—including but not limited to their rapid changes, malign intentions, and capabilities to carry out attacks on people and specific assets—for the purpose of guarding against those deadly incidents in the future. As such, the specific aims of this study are to identify and analyze terrorism risk factors in West Africa; explain the rationale behind the determination of an individual to become a terrorist, seek involvement or commitment in a terror group, and perpetrate specific types of violence; assess terrorism risks and threats in some West African countries; clarify the ECOWARN's lack of focus on terrorism risk and threat assessment; and put forward a reorientation of ECOWARN in a bid to facilitate the assessment and mitigation of terrorism risk and threat in the ECOWAS' member states.

To achieve these aims, the methodological approach of this study will be qualitative. As such, secondary data related to the security situation in the ECOWAS region thus including highlights, incident reports, policy briefs and other necessary data from the ECOWAS Commission as well as academic books, papers published in academic journals, and newspaper articles will be collected. The collection and use of primary data are a tremendous asset to this study but this is not a possible option due to the constraints related to the COVID-19 pandemic. As an alternative, the research will be descriptive and analytical. Its descriptive part will clear the path for the identification of the risk or threat factors of terrorism within ECOWAS region. Once the factors are identified, the analytical framework will help evaluate the terrorism risk and threat brought forth through an exploration of the TRAM methodology.

As far as the limitations are concerned, this research lacks primary data as the assessment of the asset and infrastructure of some West Africa-based organizations or companies was not taken into consideration within the application of TRAM methodology due to the constraints related to the COVID-19 pandemic. Besides, the research's assessment of terrorism risks and threats in West Africa is limited to two ECOWAS member states such as Nigeria and Mali. However, this choice is quite strategic to this study as the two countries are the most affected by terrorism in West Africa. Another limitation to this research is the inaccessibility of data from ECOWARN as the contents of its website are not publicly accessible.

The research is made up of three chapters. The first chapter will start with a conceptualization of the central concepts. Further, it will look at the existing theoretical frameworks in line with terrorism risk and threat assessment. These theoretical frameworks that consist of relative deprivation and threat perception theories will help understand the existing and emerging risks to terrorism in the ECOWAS region. The chapter will also present an overview of the Terrorism Risk Assessment and Management (TRAM) which is crucial for the identification, evaluation, and analysis of these terrorism risks. The second chapter will firstly identify and analyze some potential risk factors of terrorism within the ECOWAS region. Insights from the relative deprivation theory will shape the identification of these risk factors. The second part of the chapter will assess the terrorism risk within the region using the TRAM methodology. Finally, the third chapter will offer an overview of the ECOWAS Early Warning System and determine whether there are facts that underpin its lack of focus on the assessment of terrorism risk and threat. Later, the chapter will provide insights for a reorientation of ECOWARN in line with the terrorism risk and threat assessment within ECOWAS region. The chapter will also discuss the challenges related to this reorientation and lastly provide some perspectives.

CHAPTER ONE

CONCEPTUALIZATION AND CONTEXTUALIZATION

1.1. Introduction

This first chapter is organized into three grand sections. The first section will conceptualize central concepts to this study. The second one will look at the existing theoretical frameworks in line with terrorism risk and threat assessment. These theoretical frameworks that consist of relative deprivation and threat perception theories will help understand the existing and emerging risks to terrorism in the ECOWAS region. The following and last section will present the TRAM methodology as the analytical framework of this thesis thus necessary for the identification, evaluation, and analysis of these terrorism risks.

1.2. CONCEPTUAL CLARIFICATION

In this section, the concepts such as terrorism, risk, threat, risk and threat assessment, terrorism risk and threat, terrorism risk and threat assessment, and early warning will be conceptualized.

1.2.1. Terrorism

Terrorism is a controversial term as it is so difficult to come up with its generally accepted definition. The United States Department of State (DOS) has defined terrorism in 1983 as a "premeditated, politically motivated violence perpetrated against noncombatant targets by subnational groups or clandestine agents, usually intended to influence an audience."[1] Here the "noncombatant" concept gets to mean unarmed civilians or military personnel who is not on duty.[2] This definition of terrorism is quite crucial as it constitutes groundwork for the prosecution of the terrorism perpetrators. Nonetheless, there are no universal and consensual definitions of terrorism but, as a National Research Council (NRC) panel puts it, "a multiplicity of overlapping efforts, some more satisfactory than others, but none analytically

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[1] United States Department of State. (April, 2004). *Patterns of Global Terrorism 2003*, Washington, DC: Office of the Secretary of State, Office of the Coordinator for Counterterrorism, p. xii.
[2] Ibid.

sufficient."[3] The concept is debatable and essentially contested at its core. In a bid to address this deficiency, there is a definition formulated by NRC which considers terrorism as an "(a) illegal use or threatened use of force or violence (b) with an intent to coerce societies or governments by inducing fear in their populations (c) typically with political and/or ideological motives and justifications and (d) an 'extra-societal' element, either 'outside' society in the case of domestic terrorism or 'foreign' in the case of international terrorism".[4] Albeit broad, this definition may be regarded as limited in term of its utility as other critical variables might be needed. In February 2005, a report from the United States National Science and Technology Council states that the use of terrorism concept "may over-simplify different types of actors, warfare and motivations, encapsulating them in a single group or act so that critical variables are overlooked."[5] The "overlooked critical variables" stressed in the definition can be understood through activities or actions that provide for example social welfare services but fall under the category of violence.

The variation of the terrorism definitions can also be emphasized through the nature of the targets of terrorist attacks. Referring to the DOS definition, is terrorism made up of attacks targeting only 'noncombatant' persons and ignoring 'armed' military personnel? If the term terrorism should be regarded as any attack perpetrated solely against a noncombatant target, then any attack targeting 'armed' military should not fall below the threshold of terrorism essence. As a matter of fact, attacks against military targets need to be categorized as military operations, thus paving the way for the prosecution of the perpetrators in military courts as guerrillas. To address this issue, Boaz Ganor labels terrorism as "a form of violent struggle in which violence is deliberately used against civilians in order to achieve political goals (nationalistic, socioeconomic, ideological, religious, etc.)."[6] He states that targeting civilians deliberately in a bid to achieve political goals is the best way to distinguish guerrilla warfare from a terrorist act, where military installations are targeted.[7]

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[3]National Research Council. (2002). Terrorism: Perspectives from the Behavioral and Social Sciences. Washington, DC: *The National Academies Press*, p. 2. https://doi.org/10.17226/10570
[4] Ibid.
[5] U.S. National Science and Technology Council. (February, 2005). Combating Terrorism: Research Priorities in the Social, Behavioral and Economic Sciences. *Executive Office of the President*, p. 7. https://www.hsdl.org/?view&did=454862
[6] Ganor B. (2005). The Counter-Terrorism Puzzle: A Guide for Decision Makers. *New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Publishers*, p. 17.
[7] Ibid., p.20.

Ganor's approach to terrorism definition is very necessary as it enables a criminalization of terrorism by the international community. That is, his formulation can help nations agree on the fact that targeting civilians in a deliberate manner is unlawful and should be legislatively and universally criminalized, and attacks targeting military personnel would be subject to a regular war with a military retaliation right against the perpetrators. In his conclusion, Ganor argues that terrorist groups would definitely "abandon terrorism and focus on guerrilla activity to achieve their political aims" in case the terrorist acts were outlawed by the international community as a form of warfare.[8] But this argumentation is subject to limitations as terrorists are unlikely to let go such stratagem against civilians even if it might result in international condemnation, for the only reason that they are far from being 'guerrilla' warriors, but purposely focus on 'soft' targets that can be easily attacked.

However, it is very important to come up with a clear definition of the concept in this study. For instance, Joshua Sinai defines terrorism as follow: "Terrorism is a tactic of warfare involving premeditated, politically motivated violence perpetrated by sub-national groups or clandestine agents against any citizen of a state, whether civilian or military, to influence, coerce, and, if possible, cause mass casualties and physical destruction upon their targets. Unlike guerrilla forces, terrorist groups are less capable of overthrowing their adversaries' governments than on inflicting discriminate or indiscriminate destruction that they hope will coerce them to change policy."[9] Interestingly, his formulation of terrorism is quite general, complementary to the above mentioned ones and can somehow instigate agreement on how the term terrorism has to be defined.

1.2.2. Risk

The rise of risk concept in the modern times finds its essence in its religious past. Unlike the 'sin', 'faith' and 'destiny' concepts that dealt with the future through the description of the present actions' irreversibility whether moral or immoral, the modern concept of risk cares for the opportunity for change.[10] According to Peter L.

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[8]Ganor, B. (2005). The Counter-Terrorism Puzzle: A Guide for Decision Makers. *New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Publishers*, p. 24.

[9] Sinai, J. (2008). How to Define Terrorism. *Perspectives on Terrorism, 2*(4), p.11. Retrieved November 10, 2020, from http://www.jstor.org/stable/26298341

[10] See, Bernstein, P. L. (1998). Against the Gods: The Remarkable Story of Risk. New York: *John Wiley & Sons*, p. 1; Douglas, M. (1990). Risk as forensic resource. *Dædalus* 119(4), pp.1-16; and

Bernstein, the "revolutionary idea that defines the boundary between modernity and the past is the mastery of risk: the notion that the future is more than a whim of the gods and that man and women are not passive before nature."[11] Reasoning with Luhmann, the concept of risk has a direct connection to decision-making with "the realization that certain advantages are to be gained only if something is at stake."[12] As such, political action and decisions find their justification in the concept of risk as a result of its abandon of past constraints and its embracement of new and bright future.[13] As the inter-connection between risk and progress had become more formalized and technified with the emergence of probabilistic thinking and statistical methods, the rise of banking, insurance and investment had also turned 'risk' into a quantifiable, calculable, individualizable and classifiable entity during the 17th century.[14] Today, the concept of risk has been diversely theorized within a broader range of social science fields.

Indeed, risk comprises any actions or situations whose consequences are deemed uncertain and undecided. It is simply regarded as the uncertainty characterizing an incident and its consequences in each situation.[15] The degree of this uncertainty determines the extent of the risk. In this regard, risk indicates not the degree of the likelihood for an event to happen but the level of uncertainty in line with a particular occurrence. Actually, the essential point is to figure out whether an event is going to occur and how its outcome will look like.[16] The concept of risk, threat and uncertainty can be used in a limited way as synonyms as they constitute the degrees of impact or intensity of an event. Risk insinuates a lack of knowledge pertaining to a problem and its outcome in a situation where important and urgent decisions need to be made.[17] However, risk should not be regarded as identical to uncertainty as in consonance with Vertzberger, "risk exists even when there is a perfect knowledge of all possible outcomes associated with an event and what is

Giddens A. (1990). The Consequences of Modernity. Cambridge: *Polity in association with Blackwell*, p. 34.

[11] Bernstein P. L. (1998). Against the Gods. New York: *John Wiley & Sons*, p.1.

[12] Luhmann N. (1993). Risk: A Sociological Theory. Berlin and New York: *Walter de Gruyter*, p.11.

[13] Ibid.

[14] Hacking I. (2003). Risk and Dirt. In: Doyle A and Ericson RV (eds) Risk and Morality. Toronto: *University of Toronto Press*, pp. 22-47.

[15] Valsamakis A.C., Vivian R.W., et al. (1999). Risk management. *Heineman*, Second edition, pp. 39-40.

[16] Ibid.

[17] Hertz D., Thomas H. (1984). Practical risk analysis: An approach though case history. *Chinchester, John Wiley*, p. 3.

known of the probability distribution of its result."[18] That being said, risk can be grasped as a probable danger whereas uncertainty simply implies a situation where a decision-maker lacks both knowledge and information about the probabilities of the outcomes. The concept of risk can then be used in case the outcomes are unknown and their probabilities deemed uncertain, thus resulting in unfavorable or harmful consequences for decision makers.[19] In this regard, risk finds itself in a position between certainty and uncertainty i.e. where the outcomes or consequences are known and where they are not. There is therefore a risk typology that clearly makes a distinction between a "real risk", a "perceived risk", and an "acceptable risk".[20] A real risk is an objective or actual risk that results from a specific situation or a behavior regardless of whether it is known or unknown by decision-makers. Perceived risk is constructed socially. It is the experienced degree of a risk that the decision makers attribute in a subjective way to a given behavior or situation when pursuing their aims. An acceptable risk, however, is the degree of a sustainable risk that the decision-makers bear in pursuit of these aims.[21]

1.2.3. Threat

The idea of threat spreads throughout the contemporary world politics with a considerable influence on political discourse. Today, threat is perceived from different dimensions of security challenges such as immigration, border insecurity, terrorist bombings, cyber-attacks on financial and security systems, military changes and nuclear arms proliferation concerns in North Korea or Iran, etc. Threat is recognized as a supposition of a considerable damage to a political entity. According to Creppell, the threat concept is formed throughout five core elements : "(a) the threat: a signal of danger enacted/made and received/perceived–that is, a conveyance of information about something to happen; (b) the threatener: the entity or act/event perpetrating the danger signal; (c) the dangerousness of the threat: the content of

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[18] Vertberger, Y. Y. I. (1998). Risk Taking and Decision-Making: Foreign Military Intervention Decisions. Stanford: *Oxford University Press*, p. 20.
[19] Ibid.
[20] Hough, M., Du Plessis A., et al. (2008). Threat and Risk Analysis in the context of strategic forecasting. *ISSUP Ad Hoc Publication*, no 45, p. 10.
[21] Ibid., p.10.

harm/danger; (d) the threatened: the entity expected to suffer or be damaged; and (e) perceiver or interpreter of the harm."[22]

Threat is also "a statement of an intention to inflict pain, injury, damage, or other hostile action on someone."[23] This basic definition necessarily refers to the existence of a *hostile actor* in the society whose goal is to considerably inflict some sort of harm to people and valuable assets. In reference to the constructivist approaches in International Relations, speech acts may instrumentally construct threats and enemies.[24] With regard to the existing literature in International Relations, threat refers to a situation that highlights an agent or group having the intention or being able to cause harm to another agent or group.[25] Threats are based on probability distribution as they may be executed or not. In this regard, two categories of threats can be addressed: threats against people and the ones against groups of people.[26] International Relations field is mainly focused–but not only–on the category of threats against groups of people. Thus, military threats, economic threats, and cultural threats can be recognized as the forms of threats against groups of people. On the contrary, negative outcomes on someone's physical security, personal assets, and personal beliefs or values can be noted as the forms of threats against people.

In line with this study, it is very crucial to stress a difference between the risk and threat concepts. Indeed, this distinction can be emphasized throughout the human intentionality which can be harmful (negative) or unharmful (positive). As such, Beck attributes risk to a *positive* human intentionality whose harms are all about 'bads' that are tied up with the production of 'goods' whereas threat can be attributed to a *negative* intentionality with a harm that ill-intentioned actors deliberately produce.[27]

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[22] Creppell I. (2011). The Concept of Normative Threat. *International Theory*, 3(3), p. 453. DOI:10.1017/S1752971911000170

[23] Threat: Definition of Threat by Oxford Dictionary on Lexico.com.(n.d.). Retrieved November 18, 2020, from https://www.lexico.com/definition/threat.

[24] See, Buzan B., Wæver O., et al. (1998). Security: A New Framework of Analysis. Boulder, CO: *Lynne Rienner*.

[25] Davis J. W. (2000). Threats and promises: The pursuit of international influence. Baltimore, MD: *Johns Hopkins University Press*, p. 10.

[26] MacKuen M. B., Robert S. E., et al. (1992). Peasants or bankers? The American electorate and the U.S. economy. *American Journal of Political Science*, 86, pp. 597-611.

[27] Beck, U. (2002). The terrorist threat: World risk society revisited. *Theory, Culture and Society*, 19(4), p. 44.

1.2.4. Risk and Threat Assessment

Threat assessment is regarded as the first component of risk management.[28] This assessment encompasses all the possible security threats (criminal, terrorist, natural, accidental, etc.) that can target a specific location including the analysis of available information for the evaluation of each threat's relative probability of occurrence.[29] Threat assessment also comprises a set of activities which by means of investigation and operation are aimed at identifying, assessing and managing individuals that are likely to pose a serious threat of violence to some specific targets.[30] That is, the threat assessment is made up of an analysis of thoughts or behavioral patterns that may end up in the attack of a specific location. As a rule of thumb, the threat assessment should identify the degree of the threat carried out at a given point by an individual. This assessment also includes an evaluation of the progress that the individual made toward the execution of an attack and the speed at which it was approached.[31] The approach to the threat assessment of a targeted violence follows three important rules: "(1) targeted violence is the culmination of a process of thinking and behavior that is deliberate and not impulsive; (2) there is interaction among the potential attacker, a past emotional event, a current situation, and a target; and (3) understanding the behaviors of the individual as they progress from the development of the idea to the actual movements toward the target."[32]

As far as risk assessment is concerned, it is regarded as a continuous process that needs to be adapted to emerging threat levels in a bid to determine the outcomes and the occurrence likelihood of an attack.[33] In keeping with the *International Standards*

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[28] Renfroe, N. A., Smith, J.L. (2016). Threat / Vulnerability Assessments and Risk Analysis. *Applied Research Associates*. Retrieved November 21, 2020 from https://www.wbdg.org/resources/threat-vulnerability-assessments-and-risk-analysis.

[29] Ibid.

[30] Borum R., Fein R., et al. (1999). Threat Assessment: Defining an Approach to Assessing Risk for Targeted Violence. *Mental Health Law & Policy Faculty Publications*, No.146, pp. 327. https://doi.org/10.1002/(SICI)1099-0798(199907/09)17:3<323::AID-BSL349>3.0.CO;2-G

[31] Ibid., pp. 327-328.

[32] Zierhoffer D. (2014). Threat Assessment: Do Lone Terrorists Differ from Other Lone Offenders? *Journal of Strategic Security, 7*(3), pp. 52. Retrieved November 21, 2020, from https://www.jstor.org/stable/26465193

[33] European Commission. (April, 2020). Terrorism Risk Assessment of Public Spaces for Practitioners. Retrieved November 21, 2020, from https://ec.europa.eu/newsroom/pps/item-detail.cfm?item_id=674909&utm_source=pps_newsroom&utm_medium=Website&utm_campaign=pps&utm_content=Terrorism%20Risk%20Assessment%20of%20Public%20Spaces%20for%20Practitioners&lang=en

Organization, the most common approach to risk assessment is based upon three different steps such as the risk identification; the analysis of risk involving the critical assets identification, potential consequences analysis, the estimation of likelihood, and the vulnerabilities identification ; and finally the risk evaluation with the selection of required and appropriate responses basing on the existing attack scenarios as well as their outcomes.[34]

1.2.5. Terrorism Risk and Threat

There have been an important and growing number of literatures that deals with the terrorism risk and threat concepts with the early post-9/11 period as starting point.[35] The conceptualization of terrorism risk is debatable as the concept relates to a broad range of other concepts like attacks, threats, uncertainties, vulnerabilities, outcomes of attacks, probability distributions, etc.[36] Garrick and Garrick *et al.* have among others attempted to provide a definition to the terrorism risk concept.[37] They argue that the triplet definition of risk–known as "si,pi,ci" with "si = ith scenario", "pi = probability of the scenario", and "ci = consequence of the ith scenario"–can be applied to the terrorism risk.[38] Moreover, when addressing the risk concept, three important questions need to be captured such as "what might go wrong?", "How probable is it to occur?" and "What are the outcomes in case it does occur?"[39] So, the application of the first question to the terrorism risk turns the question into "How can a terrorist deliberately make something happen to achieve a desired outcome?"[40]

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[34] See, International Standards Organization. (2018). ISO 31010: 2018 'Risk Management - Risk Assessment Techniques.

[35] See, to mention a few, Paté-Cornell E., Guikema S. (2002). Probabilistic Modeling of Terrorist Threats: A systems analysis approach to setting priorities among countermeasures. *Military Operations Research*, 7(4), pp. 5-20.; Major J.A. (2002). Advanced techniques for modeling terrorism risk. *Journal of Risk and Financial Management*, 4(1), pp. 15-24.

[36] Aven T., Guikema S. (2015). On the Concept and Definition of Terrorism Risk. *Risk Analysis*, 35(12), p. 2162. https://doi.org/10.1111/risa.12518.

[37] Garrick, B.J. (2002). Perspectives on the use of risk assessment to address terrorism. *Risk Analysis*, 22(3), pp. 421-423; Garrick B. J., Hallb J.E., et al. (2004). Confronting the risks of terrorism: Making the right decisions. *Reliability Engineering & System Safety*, No. 86 pp. 129-176.

[38] 'ith scenario' is the number of times the scenario occurs. See, Brown G.G., Cox L.A. Jr. (2011). How probabilistic risk assessment can mislead terrorism risk analysts. *Risk Analysis*, 31(2), pp.196-204.

[39] Aven T., Guikema S. (2015). On the Concept and Definition of Terrorism Risk. *Risk Analysis*, 35(12), pp. 2163. https://doi.org/10.1111/risa.12518.

[40] Garrick B. J., Hallb J.E., et al. (2004). Confronting the risks of terrorism: Making the right decisions. *Reliability Engineering & System Safety*, No. 86, pp. 129-176.

Aven and Guikema (2015) propose some criteria through which the terrorism risk concept needs to be evaluated and defined:

> "(1) There should be a distinction between the concept of terrorism risk and how to measure/describe terrorism risk (the tool used) ; (2) The concept of terrorism risk should exist without (technical) modeling ; (3) The concept of terrorism risk and its measurements should relate to threats, attacks, the consequences of these threats and attacks, and uncertainties ; (4) The concept of terrorism risk and its measurements should not be based on value judgments ; and (5) The concept of terrorism risk and its measurements should be able to reflect interaction between actors."[41]

In this regard, they present different categories of definitions that try to conceptualize terrorism risk. The first category implies that *"Terrorism Risk = Expected Consequences (R=EC) or Expected Utility (R=EU)"* and a typical example of its application is provided by Willis through the conceptualization that the consequences expected from a prevailing threat related to a particular attack can be expressed as *"Risk = (probability that attack occurs) x (probability that the attack results in damage) x (expected extent of damage given that attacks occurs and results in damage)."* [42] The second one formulates terrorism risk as *"Terrorism Risk = Consequences and Associated Probabilities (R=C&P)"* with an example that terrorism is equivalent to the aforementioned triplet "s_i, p_i, c_i" thus used among others, by Garrick *et al.*(2004) as well as Ezell and von Winterfeldt ; and another example that risk refers to the probability as well as outcomes of a single or several scenarios of that involve a damage.[43] Kumamoto and Henley provide an extension to this second example as they formulate the risk as the quintuplet "$L_i, O_i, U_i, CS_i,$ and Po_i" with i as the scenario, and "L, O, U, CS, and PO" respectively as the "loss, outcome, likelihood, causal scenario, and affected population."[44]

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[41] Aven T., Guikema S. (2015). On the Concept and Definition of Terrorism Risk. *Risk Analysis*, 35(12), pp. 2163-2164. https://doi.org/10.1111/risa.12518.

[42] Willis H.H. (2007). Guiding resource allocations based on terrorism risk. *Risk Analysis*, 27(3), pp. 597-606.

[43] See, Ezell B.C., von Winterfeldt D. (2009). Probabilistic risk analysis and bioterrorism risk. *Biosecurity and Bioterrorism*, 7(11), pp. 108-110; DFI. (September, 2006). Evaluating methodologies in support of homeland security R&D investment decision-making. *DFI International*.

[44] Kumamoto H., Henley E.J. (1996). Probabilistic Risk Assessment and Management for Engineers and Scientists. New York: *IEE Press*.

The third category "(*Terrorism Risk = Events (A) or Consequences (C) (R=A or C)*" is exclusively related to the events or the consequences. The first example to this approach conceptualizes terrorism risk as an event in which human values (including humans) are at stake where the consequence is uncertain.[45] The following example regards terrorism risk as an event's uncertain outcome in line with something that humans really value.[46] The fourth and last category implying that "*Terrorism Risk = Consequences and Uncertainty (R=C&U)*" relies on the (severity of the) consequences of the events. It is based on uncertainty associated not with the probability but the outcomes. The term uncertainty is broader than probability which constitutes one of uncertainty's important descriptors. An example of this approach is provided by Aven as he conceptualizes terrorism risk as being the same thing as the consequences and the related uncertainty both combined.[47] Another example is that of Aven and Renn, thus defining terrorism risk as the dangerousness of the outcomes of an incident and its related uncertainty in line with something of human value.[48]

1.2.6. Terrorism Risk and Threat Assessment

With regards to the concepts defined above, terrorism risk assessment can be labeled as the evaluation of the likelihood for a terrorist attack to occur and its potential consequences or outcomes. A continuous assessment of terrorism risk helps policy-makers most especially public space authorities make informed and appropriate decisions regarding the securitization of public spaces in general and critical infrastructure in particular with an important collaboration between various authorities such as security experts, intelligence agencies and researchers. [49]

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[45] See, Rosa E.A. (1998). Metatheoretical foundations for post-normal risk. *Journal of Risk Research*, No. 1, pp. 15-44.; And Rosa E.A. (2003). The logical structure of the social amplification of risk framework (SARF): Metatheoretical foundation and policy implications. In Pidegeon N., Kaspersen R.E., Slovic P. (eds). The Social Amplification of Risk. Cambridge: *Cambridge University Press*, 2003.
[46] Renn O., Graham P. (2005). White paper on risk governance. Towards an integrative approach. Geneva: *International Risk Governance Council*.
[47] Aven T. (2007). A unified framework for risk and vulnerability analysis and management covering both safety and security. *Reliability Engineering & System Safety*, No. 92, pp. 745-754.
[48] Aven T., Renn O. (2009). On risk defined as an event where the outcome is uncertain. *Journal of Risk Research*, No. 12, pp. 1-11.
[49] See, European Commission. (April, 2020). Terrorism Risk Assessment of Public Spaces for Practitioners. Retrieved November 21, 2020, from https://ec.europa.eu/newsroom/pps/item-detail.cfm?item_id=674909&utm_source=pps_newsroom&utm_medium=Website&utm_campaign=p

Terrorism threat assessment, in contrast, can be regarded as the assessment of the intention and capability of a terrorist (group) to carry out an attack. According to Stromgen and Ryan, the term capability is determined through the probability distribution that a given group would carry out a specific attack in line with its acquisition or difficulty to acquire a weapon, and deliver the attack, while intent or intention depicts the probability related to the execution of the attack with regard to the target's level of attractiveness and deterrence.[50] To sum up, terrorism risk assessment constitutes an evaluation of the likelihood for an attack to occur at a specific location and a precise time, as well as an evaluation of the potential outcomes or consequences of the attack. Concerning terrorism threat assessment, it precedes terrorism risk assessment and evaluates in that sense the intention and capabilities of terrorist groups to deliver an attack successfully. As such, terrorism risk and threat assessment can be regarded as a tremendous asset for an effective prevention of terrorism.

1.2.7. Early Warning

From an academic stance, early warning is regarded as "any initiative that focuses on systematic data collection, analysis and/or formulation of recommendations, including risk assessment and information sharing, regardless of topic, whether they are quantitative, qualitative or a blend of both."[51] In line with Woocher, three components can distinguished within early warning: "first, estimating the magnitude and timing of relative risks of emerging threats; secondly, analyzing the nature of these threats and describing plausible scenarios, and thirdly, communicating warning analyses to decision makers."[52] But the availability of information does not exclusively make up early warning per se as the data collected should serve a clear and precise goal. In this regard, three pillars such as preparedness, prevention, and mitigation guide early warning process. Early warning is mostly applied to conflict

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ps&utm_content=Terrorism%20Risk%20Assessment%20of%20Public%20Spaces%20for%20Practiti oners&lang=en

[50] Stromgen, C. & Ryan, K. A. (June, 2008). Introduction to the Terrorism Risk Assessment and Management (TRAM) Methodology. *Science Applications International Corporation* (SAIC), *U.S. Department of Homeland Security* (DHS) & *National Preparedness Directorate* (NPD), pp. 4.

[51] Austin A. (2004). Early Warning and the Field: A Cargo Cult Science ? *Berghof Research Centre for Constructive Conflict Managemen*t, p. 2. Retrieved November 25, 2020 from https://berghof-foundation.org/library/early-warning-and-the-field-a-cargo-cult-science.

[52] Woocher L. (2009). Preventing violent conflict, Assessing Progress, Meeting Challenges. *United State Institute of Peace*, p. 3. Retrieved November, 25 2020 from https://www.usip.org/sites/default/files/preventing_violent_conflict.pdf

prevention and entails "near real-time assessment of events that, in a high risk environment, are likely to accelerate or trigger the rapid escalation of conflict."[53] That said, early warning, to be effective, must involve data collection and analysis uniformly and systematically, as it's aimed at strengthening in a timely way the end-users capacity in terms of identifying the critical developments, so that violent conflicts and their destructive effects can be addressed through the formulation of coherent and appropriate response strategies.[54]

1.3. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORKS

The theoretical frameworks upheld in this study are made up of relative deprivation theory, threat perception theory, and risk society theory.

1.3.1. Relative Deprivation Theory

The relation between terrorism and relative deprivation theory was for the first time articulated by Ted Gurr with his explanation on how the rise of collective discontent is shaped by the gap between expected and achieved welfare.[55] Gurr posits that collective discontent stemmed from a sense of relative deprivation mainly justifies terrorism and political violence. According to Gurr, relative deprivation refers to a tension emerged from a disparity between a person's achieved and expected welfare.[56] This theory finds its strength and source in Frustration-Aggression Hypothesis according to which frustration causes aggressive behavior.

However, an important element in this theory is related to the contrast within aspiration and expectation. Just as Webber puts it, "if we expect something to happen then we are likely to feel discontented if it does not materialize. If we aspire to something, then we may feel less discontent if it does not materialize. It could be argued that an aspiration is a subjective perception of future potential, whereas an expectation is more fully based on an assessment of objective probabilities, e.g.

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[53] Gurr T. (1995). Victims of the State: Genocides, Politicised and Group Repression from 1945 to 1995. in A. J. Longman (ed.) (1996). Contemporary Genocides: Causes, Cases, Consequences, Leiden: *PIOOM/University of Leiden*, p. 137.

[54] See, Cilliers J. (2008).The Continental Early Warning System of the African Union: What Role for Civil Society? in Nhema and Zeleza (eds.) (2008) *The Resolution of African Conflicts*, pp. 38-51. Cited by Malam, B. (2015). The Challenges of Building Regional Security Architecture: An Appraisal of ECOWAS Early Warning System. *Humanities and Social Sciences Review*, 4(1), p. 129.

[55] Gurr T. R. (1970). Why Men Rebel. Princeton, NJ: *Princeton University Press*, p. 12.

[56] Ibid., p. 12.

social status, qualifications, either actual or potential, and ethnicity." [57] Thus, individuals feel likely aggrieved when comparing their social position to others and end up realizing that they are lower in status to others regarding what they have confidence in deserving. The theory of relative deprivation helps better understand how differences and economic disparities between individuals of different social category such as haves and have-nots can provoke political violence and terrorism.[58] Moreover, it must be noted that the relative deprivation approach finds its real essence in Moghaddam's 'staircase to terrorism' which sheds light on the psychology of terrorists.[59]

According to Moghaddam, an individual who encounters "injustice and the feelings of frustration and shame" on "the ground floor" is likely to become a terrorist.[60] In case the situation remains the same on the following floors, especially the fourth and the fifth, this individual will end up considering terrorism as his/her only option left to get a "democratic participation in addressing perceived injustices."[61] However, terrorism can be prevented and curbed "only by reforming conditions on the ground floor."[62] In order to mitigate the threats of those reaching the last floor, a dialogue within political leaders would be critical as it has been the case in Northern Ireland with the participation of the Irish Republican Army (IRA) in politics.[63] In this regard, Moghaddam labels the U.S. military instruments in line with its war on terror as "naïve reliance" with the conclusion that those measures are far

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[57] Webber, C. (2007). Revaluating Relative Deprivation Theory. *Theoretical Criminology*, 11 (1), pp. 97-120.

[58] Victoroff, J. (2005). The Mind of the Terrorist: A Review and Critique of Psychological Approaches. *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, 49(1), p. 17.

[59] Moghaddam F. M. (2005). The Staircase to Terrorism : A Psychological Exploration. *American Psychologist*, 60(2), pp. 161-169. DOI: 10.1037/0003-066X.60.2.161.

[60] The 'ground floor' is where the individual is discontent with what s/he gets unlike his/her expectation. See, Moghaddam F. M. (2005). The Staircase to Terrorism: A Psychological Exploration. *American Psychologist*, 60(2), p. 162 DOI: 10.1037/0003-066X.60.2.161.

[61] Following the 'ground floor', the 'staircase to terrorism' is made up of five other floors. The first floor, in this staircase metaphor, occurs when the individual makes progress or challenges himself or herself not to become a terrorist despite his/her frustration. In case the situation does not improve and instead the individual keeps on getting frustrated, he/she tends to move up to the second floor. On the second floor, the perceived frustration makes him/her embrace an aggressive behavior. The third floor is characterized by the individual's disengagement from morality, particularly, the one that states that the act of killing (i.e. terrorist act) is wrong, thus, making him/her endorse terrorism and move to the fourth floor. On the fourth floor, the individual is embraced by a categorical thinking: 'us' against 'them', 'we are right, they are wrong', etc. On the final and fifth floor, the individual is prone to execute his/her terrorist threat.
See, Moghaddam F. M. (2005). The Staircase to Terrorism: A Psychological Exploration. *American Psychologist*, 60(2), p. 166. DOI: 10.1037/0003-066X.60.2.161.

[62] Ibid., p. 167.

[63] Ibid., p. 168.

from ending terrorist threats in the long-term.[64] That is to say, the U.S. policies against terrorism are developed in the short-term and mostly target individuals who have already reached the last floor, and are about to attack or have already done it, while what is needed to effectively prevent terrorism are long-term measures that are capable of hindering individuals from moving beyond the ground floor. Furthermore, it must be noted that these long-term policies should also address all the floors and be suitable for the individuals on each floor.

The relative deprivation theory is useful to this study as it will help emphasize the need for policy-makers to address the risks they may take themselves regarding social injustices, the welfare differences and economic disparities among the "haves and have-nots", corruption, lack of democratic culture, marginalization, and so on– which if not addressed may constitute a catalyst provoking terrorist threats. Nonetheless, relative deprivation theory like other psychological perspectives to the study of terrorism was criticized because of its lack of ability to stem its important data from primary sources obtained out of interviews with people engaged in terrorist act or from their life histories. Any findings and hypotheses come up with in this condition or through the gathering of cases in a small number are deemed unreliable and speculative, respectively.[65] In addition, the relative deprivation theory like other psychological schools of terrorism cannot comprehensively explain all events related to terrorism as its only focus is the terrorists' individual motivation in lieu of the social group's.

1.3.2. Threat Perception Theory

It is common sense that international politics is complicated as it is full of unobservable phenomena that escape the awareness of policymakers. As such, policymakers can only be aware of observable phenomena in the international system. That said, policymakers implement policy in accordance with the result of their relevant perception of state and non-state actors' intentions and capabilities within the international system. Robert Jervis refers to perception as "the causes and consequences of the ways in which decision-makers draw inferences from the

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[64] Ibid. p. 167.

[65] Crenshaw M. (2000). The psychology of Terrorism: An agenda for the 21st century. *Political Psychology*, Vol. 21, p. 409.

world."[66] A scientific perspective from psychology regards perception as "the process of apprehending by means of the senses and recognizing and interpreting what is processed."[67] In this regard, perception lays the foundation for the grasp of the world politics and backs decision-making system.[68] The perception of the threat from the enemy is thus critical when articulating policy as threat perception according to David Singer, refers to the "function of both estimated capability and estimated intent."[69] But analyzing the enemy threat includes different cases that need to be distinguished.

The first case is related to the fact that the enemy has considerable military capabilities to cause harm but is intentionally benign. The second characterization applies to a political actor with a malign intent but being powerless or having almost no military capabilities to execute his/her threat. The final case concerns the enemy with both malicious intentions and significant military capabilities. In this regard, it might be postulated that policymakers must be focused on all actors with significant capabilities, regardless their malign or benign intents or whether they are allies or enemies. That is, today's allies of a state may not be so tomorrow. For instance, some of the strongest allies of U.S. today (i.e. Germany and Japan) not a century ago were its enemies, and during the same period of time, several of its allies (i.e. Russia and China) are among its biggest rivals today. Even Germany being a close American ally didn't impede U.S. from having spied on the German Chancellery in a bid to find out the latter's capabilities.[70]

In line with this thesis, it is so crucial to stress, however, the importance of both intent and capability in the threat perception process. Failing to do so is wrong and constitutes an error in perception also known in literature as 'misperception'[71].

[66] Jervis, R. (1976). Perception and Misperception in International Politics. Princeton: *Princeton University Press*, p. 13.

[67] Stein, J. G. (2013). Threat Perception in International Relations. in The Oxford Handbook of Political Psychology, 2nd ed., Ed. Leonie Huddy, David O. Sears, and Jack S. Levy. Oxford: *Oxford University Press*, p. 2.

[68] Ibid.

[69] Singer J. D. (1958). Threat-Perception and the Armament-Tension Dilemma. *The Journal of Conflict Resolution*, 2(1), p. 93.

[70] Reuters. (July, 2015). U.S. Spy Agency Tapped German Chancellery for Decades: WikiLeaks. Retrieved December 3, 2020 from https://www.reuters.com/article/us-germany-usa-spying-idUSKCN0PI2AD20150709.

[71] See, Castano E., Sacchi S., et al. (2003). The Perception of the Other in International Relations: Evidence for the Polarizing Effect of Entitativity. *Political Psychology*, 24(3), p. 465; Jervis R. (1976). Perception and Misperception in International Politics. Princeton: *Princeton University Press*; Stein J. G. (2013). Threat Perception in International Relations. in The Oxford Handbook of Political

Misperception refers to the overestimation or the underestimation of the threats.[72] But, if the perception of a threat that does not exist is possibly labeled as a misperception, it might not be the case for a non-existent and potential terrorist threat whose time and location of execution are uncertain and unpredictable.[73] In fact, it can be postulated that the United States' misperception or underestimation of Al-Qaeda's threats has more or less led to the 9/11 as no one has ever thought that a passenger airline jet could be turned into a missile on the United States territory. Terrorist threats need to be broadly determined on a continual basis while paying attention to exaggerated threat perception.[74]

1.4. ANALYTICAL FRAMEWORK: THE TRAM METHODOLOGY

The analytical framework adopted in this thesis pertaining to terrorism risk and threat assessment is the Terrorism Risk Assessment and Management (TRAM) methodology. This framework does not constitute *per se* a substitute–but a contribution–to this study's methodological approach as it offers incredible insights for a better assessment of terrorism risk in West Africa. Indeed, the TRAM methodology was designed by the Science Applications International Corporation (SAIC) as well as the United States Department of Homeland Security (DHS) and National Preparedness Directorate (NPD) for the purpose of backing local authorities' capability in continuous risk management of terrorism.[75] In précis, the TRAM methodology was developed to meet these three aims: firstly implementing a well-structured analytical process related to terrorism risk analysis, secondly establishing an approach for continuous risk tracking, and finally backing investment decision-making through clear articulation of the awaited return on investment to decision makers.[76] The TRAM methodology is made up of three different

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Psychology, 2nd ed., Ed. Leonie Huddy, David O. Sears, and Jack S. Levy. Oxford: *Oxford University Press*.

[72] Stein J. G. (1988). Building Politics into Psychology: The Misperception of Threat. *Political Psychology*, 9(2), pp. 246-248.

[73] Knorr K. (1976). Threat Perception. in Historical Dimensions of National Security Problems, Ed. Klaus Knorr, Lawrence: *University Press of Kansas*, p. 78.

[74] Ibid.

[75] Stromgen C., Ryan K. A. (June, 2008). Introduction to the Terrorism Risk Assessment and Management (TRAM) Methodology. *Science Applications International Corporation (SAIC), U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) & National Preparedness Directorate (NPD)*. Retrieved December 5, 2020 from https://calhoun.nps.edu/bitstream/handle/10945/51764/Stromgren_Ryan_Introduction_to_the_Terroris m_Risk_CIP_Metrics_Tools_2008.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y.

[76] Ibid., p. 2.

components such as comprehensive risk assessment component, the historical risk tracking, and finally risk mitigation component.

1.4.1. Comprehensive Risk Assessment

The first component comprises a framework that aims to assess the relative risk of terrorist attacks against the critical assets of a given organization. This framework is made up of different assessments: firstly, the criticality assessment, secondly the threat assessment, thirdly the vulnerability one, the assessment of response and recovery fourthly, and finally the impact assessment, thanks to which the scenarios are designed and evaluated to facilitate the comparison of the factors across different assets.

Criticality Assessment

The criticality assessment offers a description of the importance and the value that an asset may constitute for a jurisdiction, a region, and a nation. This process requires the typical conduct of workshops to collect input from some officials of an organization concerning the criticality of their assets. The first step that precedes this dispatch toward the organization is to elaborate an overall list of the organization's assets which are categorized in distinct groups such as assets with similar criticalities, vulnerabilities, risks, and threats. The development of this list clears the path for the establishment of the Critical Asset Factors (CAFs), thus, representing the mission and goals of the organization. These factors serve to quantify the assets' relative importance through a scale which is typically multi-attribute. The Critical Asset Factors comprise different elements such as the potentials for a loss of business continuity, casualties, emergency response function loss, economic impact, national defense importance, environmental impact, and replacement cost.[77] Once the CAFs are established, their comparison and rating are made in line with their relative value or importance within the institution's mission on a one (1) to five (5) scale with '1' as the least important to the whole mission and '5' as the most important. And then

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[77] Stromgen C., Ryan K. A. (June, 2008). Introduction to the Terrorism Risk Assessment and Management (TRAM) Methodology. *Science Applications International Corporation (SAIC), U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) & National Preparedness Directorate (NPD)*, p. 3. https://calhoun.nps.edu/bitstream/handle/10945/51764/Stromgren_Ryan_Introduction_to_the_Terroris m_Risk_CIP_Metrics_Tools_2008.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y

comes their application to each of the institution's assets. Each asset is applied on a zero (0) to ten (10) rating and attributed to each CAF, showing the factor's applicability extent to each asset. The development of an "upper-bound" criteria for each of the CAFs depends on agreement with the representatives of the organization as if "0" means the non-applicability of the factor to the asset, the value of "10" is unknown. So, "for each asset, each CAF rating (1-5) is multiplied by the asset applicability for that CAF (0-10) and the results are summed for all factors."[78] The total that results from this calculation is the criticality of the asset. If the asset ended up being completely damaged, that resultant total would constitute a measurement of the whole probable damage to the mission of the institution. Once the organization obtained the asset criticality ratings, a list of the asset is made and categorized in a descending order. That is, the most critical assets or the highest ratings are listed from the top. As a result, the organization possesses clear insights regarding the assets that concerns need to be more raised on during the risk assessment process. The figure below highlights a sample of criticality results:

#	CAF Value -->	Death / Injury	Economic Impact	National Defense	Environmental Impact	Symbolic Effect	Replacement Cost	190
	Asset Name	5	5	3	2	2	2	Total
1	Asset A	10	4	0	2	6	10	106
2	Asset B	10	4	0	2	6	5	96
3	Asset C	1	10	1	1	1	10	82
4	Asset D	1	10	1	1	1	10	82
5	Asset E	4	8	2	1	1	6	82

Figure 1: Sample Criticality Results[79]

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[78] Ibid.

[79] Stromgen C., Ryan K. A. (June, 2008). Introduction to the Terrorism Risk Assessment and Management (TRAM) Methodology. *Science Applications International Corporation (SAIC), U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) & National Preparedness Directorate (NPD)*. Retrieved December 5, 2020 from https://calhoun.nps.edu/bitstream/handle/10945/51764/Stromgren_Ryan_Introduction_to_the_Terrorism_Risk_CIP_Metrics_Tools_2008.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y

Threat Assessment

As far as the threat assessment is concerned, the TRAM methodology's risk assessment is based on scenarios. The design of an applicable series of scenarios requires that each scenario be divided into the asset targeted for the attack and the threat posed on each of the assets. The threat here captures the probability of a an attack occurring and targeting a given asset. The threat assessment phase serves to identify potential attacks targeting the previously determined assets within the criticality assessment process, and quantify the probability and severity of these attacks. The threat assessment ends with a threat rating which is developed for each of the attack scenarios conceived for the assets that are deemed.[80] Thus, the threat can be split into two different elements such as a group's capability to fullfil its malign intent and carry out an attack. The capability refers to the probability distribution that a given group would carry out a specific attack in line with its acquisition or difficulty to acquire a weapon and deliver the attack. The intent or intention, in contrast, depicts the likelihood related to the execution of the attack regarding the target's level of attractiveness and deterrence.[81] The process for threat determination is displayed in the figure below:

Figure 2: TRAM Process for determining Threat[82]

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[80] Ibid., p. 4.
[81] Ibid., p. 4.
[82] Stromgen C., Ryan K. A. (June, 2008). Introduction to the Terrorism Risk Assessment and Management (TRAM) Methodology. *Science Applications International Corporation (SAIC), U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) & National Preparedness Directorate (NPD)*. Retrieved December 5, 2020 from https://calhoun.nps.edu/bitstream/handle/10945/51764/Stromgren_Ryan_Introduction_to_the_Terrorism_Risk_CIP_Metrics_Tools_2008.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y

In a bid to determine the capability of a group to carry out an attack, the conception of several different types of attack is required. For instance, Large Conventional Explosive (LCE), Small Conventional Explosive (SCE), Radiological Weapons, Biological Weapons, and Chemical Weapons are the most assessed attacks in the TRAM methodology. The attacks are then rated in line with the probability that a terrorist group has necessary capability such as a weapon acquisition and ready to exploit this capability to strike the assets of an organization. The ratings of attacks likelihood help understand what the enemies are capable of in a malign manner. These ratings are designed for each and all the types of attack. The likelihood is rated for each attack type basing on a scale from the most improbable (0) to the most probable (10). The likelihood rating of attacks is not applied to a specific target but consists of a general probability speculating that a terrorist incident can occur at a specific location within the organization. So, the evaluation of the incident likelihood thus involving a given target is conditional to an evaluation of the enemies' intent. This intent is in turn determined through the evaluation of the *target attractiveness* of each asset in terms of terrorist attack by means of two indicators: the value of the target and its deterrence. The value of the target rated on a scale of zero (0) to ten (10) refers to the goals or the objectives of the malign group vis-à-vis a target. *Deterrence* also rated on 0 to 10 scale is all about the characteristics or all the elements that an asset is made up of and which are likely to make it less captivating for attacks. When the deterrence is lowly rated (0), this indicates that the enemy would perceive the futility of any offensive action as the targeted asset is not attractive. In contrast, highly rated deterrence (10) means that the enemy would perceive that the attack is worth it as the target asset is attractive.[83]

The *scenario likelihood* being a *target attractiveness* function and an *attack elasticity* parameter estimates the relative likelihood thus speculating the execution of a specific scenario against a specific a target. This rating reflects upon the terrorist's intentions regarding the related *attack type*. With regard to simple attack types (easily accessible weapons), terrorists would likely seek a relatively low *target attractiveness* while with a more complex attack type involving weapons that are not

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[83] Stromgen C., Ryan K. A. (June, 2008). Introduction to the Terrorism Risk Assessment and Management (TRAM) Methodology. *Science Applications International Corporation (SAIC), U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) & National Preparedness Directorate (NPD)*, pp. 4-5. https://calhoun.nps.edu/bitstream/handle/10945/51764/Stromgren_Ryan_Introduction_to_the_Terrorism_Risk_

easily accessible but more difficult to acquire and/or operationalize, the terrorists would be expected to attack an asset with a high level of *target attractiveness*. When it comes to the *attack elasticity*, it helps measure the sensitivity of the asset, which is to say from that asset's *attack likelihood* to its *target attractiveness*. The values of *attack elasticity* thus established for each attack type, lay the foundation for the *scenario likelihood* values to be determined for each scenario. In précis, the assets possessing higher ''*target attractiveness*'' would be attributed higher scenario probability for a specific type of attack.[84]

In a nutshell, this threat assessment component serves to select a series of potential attack scenarios for each of the assets after the capability and intent have been successfully determined. Once selected, each attack scenario is made up of an attack type thus targeting a specific asset. The selection of these scenarios is made throughout the rating of the scenario probability and the possibility of a specific type of attack.

Vulnerability Assessment

The third phase within the comprehensive risk assessment is the assessment of the vulnerability. The vulnerability evaluation is aimed at identifying the probability that each and all previously selected scenarios would be well delivered in case they are attempted. The purpose consists of the evaluation of the probability for critical assets to be subjected to a specific attack. The result out of this phase is the asset's entire vulnerability rating. The vulnerability of the asset is rated through the evaluation of the security countermeasures that are enforced within the jurisdiction to guard against any attack, the evaluation of the susceptibility that the attack would be noticed, and the evaluation of the probability that any attack which is detected can be strongly foiled. Attack scenarios are typically held general for them to consider all the plausible vulnerabilities in place at an asset. This helps prevent any limitation within the recommendations intended to protect an asset against a specific avenue of attack. Nonetheless, this rating process also considers the evaluation of specific vulnerabilities so that they could be addressed by identified needs.[85]

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[84] Ibid.

[85] Stromgen C., Ryan K. A. (June, 2008). Introduction to the Terrorism Risk Assessment and Management (TRAM) Methodology. *Science Applications International Corporation (SAIC), U.S.*

Response & Recovery Capabilities Assessment

The response and recovery capabilities assessment serve to evaluate the capability of a jurisdiction to effectively respond and recover from a terrorist act. This component of TRAM risk assessment is unique as it does not consider the preventive measures against terrorist attacks, but it rather addresses the organization's response and recovery ability from an incident that has already taken place. The assessment of the response is a 'self-assessment' tool that helps the organization and/or local emergency response agencies identify capabilities, shortcomings, and gaps across different functional locations of the organization. An evaluation of capabilities is carried out within each location. Each evaluation is defined as the proportions of the 'desired' capabilities of response against the 'current' ones. The 'current' capabilities of response constitute the organization's existing capability to counter a weapon of mass destruction (WMD) incident. The 'desired' response capabilities, in contrast, constitute the leading existent industry with best practices in response capability at local and nationwide.

The recovery assessment evaluates the agency's capabilities and functions in a bid to manage the recovery and continuity of activities following a terrorist incident through alternate facilities, communications, operational capability, vital records and databases, training, exercises, and tests.[86]

Impact Assessment

This last phase of the comprehensive risk assessment makes an estimation of the extent of damage caused by a WMD attack to critical assets. Regardless of its type– whether a small explosive or a biological weapon, a WMD attack might not totally destroy an asset quite critical. In line with a given scenario of attack, the impact assessment quantifies the extent to which a critical asset is damaged. That is the impact assessment represents the part of the asset's criticality or value that is lost due

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Department of Homeland Security (DHS) & National Preparedness Directorate (NPD), pp. 5-6. https://calhoun.nps.edu/bitstream/handle/10945/51764/Stromgren_Ryan_Introduction_to_the_Terroris m_Risk_

[86] Stromgen C., Ryan K. A. (June, 2008). Introduction to the Terrorism Risk Assessment and Management (TRAM) Methodology. *Science Applications International Corporation (SAIC), U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) & National Preparedness Directorate (NPD)*, p. 8. https://calhoun.nps.edu/bitstream/handle/10945/51764/Stromgren_Ryan_Introduction_to_the_Terroris m_Risk_

to the attack scenario basing on the specific attack type and the method of its delivery.[87]

After the criticality, threat, vulnerability, response and recovery capabilities, and impact assessments are successfully completed in the TRAM methodology the next step is to develop a risk profile for the organization which is a series of scenario risk results.

1.4.2. Historical Risk Tracking

The TRAM methodology's second component is the historical risk tracking. Risk tracking helps assess an organization's effectiveness in risk reduction and implementation of effective investments basing on its past experiences. It also includes the comparison of the organization's risk profile variation over time which can help understand the extent to which various events' risk has changed. That is these changes are analyzed in order to determine the variations that have occurred in the organization due to a change in the risk level.[88]

1.4.3. Risk Mitigation

This final component of the TRAM methodology evaluates the solutions of future risk mitigation by looking forward in time. Risk mitigation process helps organizations evaluate plausible mitigation projects in order to find out potential risk reduction out of their implementation. These projects generally consist of operational security, physical security, response, or recovery advances, and it is crucial to select those that could result in best return on the organization's investment.[89]

1.5. Conclusion

This first chapter sought to present the conceptual and theoretical frameworks as well as the methodological and analytical groundwork related to this research. The

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[87] Ibid., p. 9.
[88] Stromgen C., Ryan K. A. (June, 2008). Introduction to the Terrorism Risk Assessment and Management (TRAM) Methodology. *Science Applications International Corporation (SAIC), U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) & National Preparedness Directorate (NPD)*, pp. 10-11. https://calhoun.nps.edu/bitstream/handle/10945/51764/Stromgren_Ryan_Introduction_to_the_Terroris m_Risk_
[89] Ibid., pp. 11-12.

chapter is organized in three sections. Its first section was aimed at conceptualizing essential concepts to this thesis. This conceptual framework–that is made up of the concepts such as terrorism, risk, threat, risk and threat assessment, terrorism risk and threat, terrorism risk and threat assessment, and early warning–has helped understand clearly the fundamental theoretical elements of terrorism risk and threat. The second section has addressed the theoretical frameworks of this study and has, in this regard, shed light on the relative deprivation and threat perception theories which provide insights for a better understanding and analysis of terrorism risk and threat indicators within ECOWAS region. The last section of this chapter has presented and explained the three major components of the TRAM methodology which will be explored to assess terrorism risks and threats within some West African countries in the following chapter.

CHAPTER TWO

TERRORISM RISK AND THREAT IN THE ECOWAS REGION

2.1. Introduction

This chapter is made up of three sections. The first section will identify and analyze some potential risk factors of terrorism within the ECOWAS region. These risk factors will be determined by means of insights from the relative deprivation theory. The second and last section will assess the terrorism risk within the region using the three major components of the TRAM methodology.

2.2. POTENTIAL TERRORISM RISK FACTORS IN WEST AFRICA

As it was aforementioned, the relative deprivation theory provides this study with insights to determine the terrorism risks taken by policymakers themselves. That is, if risk is considered as any action whose consequences are uncertain or unknown, it's then crucial to identify and analyze any political moves or decisions that are likely to provoke terrorism. In that sense, variables–such as authoritarianism, corruption, religion in politics/lack of secularism to name just a few–are prone to clear the path for political violence in West Africa.

To begin with, authoritarianism or totalitarianism is related to the lack of democratic pratices in a given country. This political move can undermine a government from being effectively responsive to the expectations of its citizens. Thus, a less responsive government in a bid to retain power is likely to enforce some restrictive or coercive measures that reflect arbitrary actions, alienation, abrupt and non-constitutional changes, etc.[90] In this regard, this kind of government runs the risk of episodes of disruption and violence thus targeting its fall or demise as a result of divisions that might arise within the political spectrum in the society. As such, an authoritarian government is capable of making use of repressive tactics against these plausible challenges. But the repression, according to Bueno de Mesquita et al, increases the ideological benefit of delivering terrorist attacks against such a

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[90] See, Onubogu O. (October, 2020). Protests Test Nigeria's Democracy and its Leadership in Africa. *United States Institute of Peace*, retrieved December 20, 2020 from https://www.usip.org/publications/2020/10/protests-test-nigerias-democracy-and-its-leadership-africa.

government.[91] In fact, states that employ tactics that abuse the rights of citizens as well as their physical integrity are more likely to experience terrorism.[92]

Corruption thereafter has become rampant in the political sphere of ECOWAS Member States as it keeps affecting the socio-economic conditions of people in one way or another through job reservations, nepotism, disparities within the wealth distribution, etc.[93] As Matthew Simpson presumed, "if a country is perceived as becoming more corrupt, the rate of terrorist violence should increase. As perceived corruption decreases, rates should also decrease."[94] A high level of corruption can provoke the popular dissatisfaction which might be followed by societal uprisings thus calling for the change. And a purported mismanagement of these uprisings by a given government might result in lethal violence between law enforcement and the protesters clearing the path for frustrations which are not without serious consequences. A recent example of this variable in West Africa is the "EndSars"[95] protests against corruption and police brutality in Nigeria and in response to which the deployed army and police are reportedly accused of shooting at least 12 protesters dead.[96] This 'mismanagement' of the social movement by the Nigerian authorities have made some individuals–who might not part of the protests–endorse violence as they have reportedly looted properties, torched police buildings and even attacked some police officers.[97]

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[91] See, Bueno de Mesquita B., Smith A., et al. (2003). The Logic of Political Survival. Cambridge, MA: *MIT Press*.

[92] Walsh J. I., Piazza J. A. (2010). Why Respecting Physical Integrity Rights Reduces Terrorism. *Comparative Political Studies*, 43(4), pp. 551-77.

[93] See, ECOWAS. (May, 2019). West African regional anti-corruption network recommends modalities for corruption risk assessment training. https://www.ecowas.int/west-african-regional-anti-corruption-network-recommends-

[94] Simpson M. (2014). Terrorism and Corruption. *International Journal of Sociology*, 44(2), p. 93. DOI: 10.2753/IJS0020-7659440204

[95] ''EndSars'' is a series of socio unrests against the brutality, abuses and corruption of which the now-disbanded Special Anti-Robbery Squad was accused in Nigeria. See, ECOWAS Commission. (October, 2020). Press Release on #ENDSARS Protests in Nigeria. https://www.ecowas.int/press-release-on-endsars-protests-in-nigeria/

[96] See, BBC. (October, 2020). End Sars protests: People 'shot dead' in Lagos, Nigeria. Retrieved December 23, 2020 from https://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-54624611. See also, Amnesty International. (October, 2020). Nigeria: Killing of #EndSARS protesters by the military must be investigated. Retrieved December 23, 2020 from https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2020/10/killing-of-endsars-protesters-by-the-military-must-be-investigated/

[97] See, Verjee A., Kwaja C. (December, 2020). Nigeria's Security Failures : The Link Between EndSARS and Boko Haram. *United States Institute of Peace*, retrieved December 23, 2020 from https://www.usip.org/publications/2020/12/nigerias-security-failures-link-between-endsars-and-boko-

With regard to the religion in politics or the lack of secularism factor, a country where a single religious group dominates the society and the decision-making bodies in a bid to alter a civil law into a religious one and keep other religious beliefs out of socio-political process is prone to social unrests that might end up with terrorism.[98] Not only do the tensions arise when such a group takes over the political power but also in case it realizes that it's almost impossible to achieve this. This feeling of inability to achieve this unsecular goal is likely to pave the way for the use of violent means for the purpose of inducing fear and coercing a secular and democratically elected government. This remark is quite obvious when tapping on of the insurgencies of Boko Haram, a terrorist group in Nigeria that has been fighting for years now in order to weaken and bring down the federal government, and give rise to an islamic state. Boko Haram labels secularism, democracy and any western-style education, social or political activity as '*haram*' or forbidden.[99] Boko Haram in this regard perveives the federal government of Nigeria as being governed by non-believers.[100]

Authoritarianism, corruption and imposition of religion in politics be it successful or unsuccessful, are *inter alia* regarded as sources of grievances from which various political violences including terrorism might emerge. Two kind of grievances can be emphasized in line with terrorism development : personal grievance and group grievance. Reasoning with McCauley and Moskalenko, "Personal grievance can lead an individual to seek out and cooperate with others feeling anger toward the same perpetrator: the personal then becomes political. Group grievance can lead to involvement in conflicts with the government and police that are experienced as unjustified repression: the political then becomes personal."[101] These grievances against governments are even used by terrorist groups to incite violence or sometimes radicalize individuals and then rally them to their

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haram. See also, BBC. (October, 2020). End Sars protests: Amnesty warns of 'escalating attacks'. Retrieved December 23, 2020 from https://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-54599342.
[98] See, ECOWAS. (November, 2016). Promotion of education of the Culture of Peace through inter and intra religious dialogue in ECOWAS Region. https://www.ecowas.int/promotion-of-education-of-the-culture-of-peace-through-inter-and-intra-religious-dialogue-in-ecowas-region/
[99] Thurston A. (2016). The disease is unbelief': Boko Haram's religious and political worldview. *The Brookings Project on U.S. Relations with the Islamic World*, No. 22, p. 15.
[100] BBC News. (November, 2016). Who Are Nigeria's Boko Haram Islamist Group? Retrieved December 23, 2020 from https://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-13809501
[101] McCauley C., Moskalenko S. (2011). Friction: How radicalization happens to them and us. New York: Oxford University Press, pp. 214-215.

causes.[102] That is, these grievances in line with the aforementioned risk factors can constitute a catalyst that might provoke terrorist threats.

2.3. RISK ASSESSMENT OF TERRORISM WITHIN ECOWAS REGION

The terrorism risk assessment in this section is not aimed at an organization's asset even if it can end up supporting investment-related decision-making process. Rather, this assessment of terrorism in lieu of a specific organization's asset focuses particularly on the people within ECOWAS region. That is to say terrorist groups in West Africa are more likely to attack individuals, government and military personnel rather than a specific organization's asset.[103] That is why the following application of the TRAM methodology's components preferably and exclusively addresses the threats posed to human security by terrorist groups such as Jamaat Nusrat al-Islam wal-Muslimin (JNIM) and Boko Haram.[104]

2.3.1. Comprehensive Risk Assessment of Boko Haram and JNIM

As mentioned before, the comprehensive risk assessment is made up of the assessments of criticality, threat, vulnerability, response and recovery, and impact. To apply this framework to the ECOWAS region, the exploration of threats posed by Boko Haram and the Sahel branch of Al-Qaeda (JNIM) in countries such as Nigeria and Mali is deemed crucial. The research focuses on the two countries as they are the most affected by terrorism in West Africa according to the *2020 Global Terrorism Index (GTI)*.[105]

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[102] Le Roux P. (December, 2019). Responding to the Rise in Violent Extremism in the Sahel. *Africa Center for Strategic Studies*, 3, retrieved January 5, 2021 from https://africacenter.org/publication/responding-rise-violent-extremism-sahel/.

[103] Raymakers A. (December, 2020). Terrorism: 7 of 10 highest risk countries now in Africa-Index. *Verisk Maplecroft*, retrieved January 5, 2020 from https://www.maplecroft.com/insights/analysis/terrorism-7-of-10-highest-risk-countries-now-in-africa--index/

[104] JNIM means "Group for the Support of Islam and Muslims".

[105] GTI is a report produced yearly by the Institute for Economics and Peace by means of data collected from the Global Terrorism Database (GTD) as well as other sources. The GTD data is in turn produced by the University of Maryland's National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism (START) and made up of more than 170,000 terrorist acts for the time frame of 1970 to 2019. See, Institute for Economics & Peace. (November, 2020). Global Terrorism Index 2020: Measuring the Impact of Terrorism. p.8. https://visionofhumanity.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/GTI-2020-web-1.pdf

Criticality Assessment

Regarding the criticality assessment, it is important to stress that some interests of human value thus critical to the governments but 'abominable' to terrorist groups, are likely to be attacked. It is the case of Boko Haram whose attacks against schools, churches, government officials and military personnel in Nigeria are always motivated by its radical and ideological opposition to secularism or western-style education and political system.[106] The second case is the Sahel branch of Al-Qaeda, the Jamaat Nusrat al-Islam wal-Muslimin (JNIM) whose major motives apart from attacking governments interests and military installations, constitute foremost a radical opposition to western values especially in consideration of its ''parent'' organization (Al-Qaeda)'s 9/11 attacks against critical symbols of the United States : American commercial power (World Trade Center), political power (Capitol) and military power (Pentagone). With "its intention to destabilize local governments in favor of their interpretation of sharia law […] JNIM's ideology aligns with that of all al Qaeda affiliates, preaching vehement antipathy toward the West and local governments that collaborate with western countries."[107] That is, JNIM is opposed to the military presence of France and its western partners in Mali for the purpose of making shariah law rule the entire region.[108] This opposition can be underlined in the Sahel by the Al-Qaeda's several jihadist operations against foreign and local troops. It should be noted as a result of these operations the killings of several French soldiers in Mali bringing in the early 2021 the total number of victims to 50 since the beginning of France's Barkhane operation in 2014.[109]

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[106] See, Thurston A. (2016). The disease is unbelief': Boko Haram's religious and political worldview. *The Brookings Project on U.S. Relations with the Islamic World*, No. 22, p. 15. See also, DW. (December, 2014). Boko Haram: barrage against Western Values. Retrieved January 6, 2021 from https://www.dw.com/en/boko-haram-barrage-against-western-values/a-18134419.

[107] Zimmerer M. (2019). Terror in West Africa: A Threat Assessment of the New Al Qaeda Affiliate in Mali. *Critical Studies on Terrorism*, 12(3), pp. 491-511, https://doi.org/10.1080/17539153.2019.1599531.

[108] CSIS. (2018). Jamaat Nasr al-Islam wal-Muslimin. TNT Terrorism Backgrounder. Retrieved January 11, 2021 from https://www.csis.org/programs/transnational-threats-project/terrorism-backgrounders/jamaat-nasr-al-islam-wal-muslimin.

[109] The Barkhane operation consists of more than 5,100 French troops dispatched across the Sahel region alongside troops from Chad, Mauritania, Mali, Niger and Burkina Faso making up together the G5 Sahel group for the purpose of fighting jihadist groups. See, Aljazeera. (January, 2021). Al-Qaeda branch claims killings of French soldiers in Mali. Retrieved January 6, 2021 from https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2021/1/5/al-qaeda-branch-claims-killings-of-french-soldiers-in-mali.

Assessment of Boko Haram and JNIM's Threat

With regard to the threat assessment, Boko Haram and JNIM are known for their severe and deadly attacks against civilians and military installations in Nigeria and Mali. It's then worth raising awareness on the groups' malign intent and capabilities to deliver attacks without being foiled.

This intent is not related to their radical ideology which is an open secret but rather about their plans of attacks at a specific location and a defined moment. The groups' plans of attacks are uncertain and to some extent unknown to the states as a result of the challenges that affect the effectiveness of the latter's counterterrorism-related intelligence activities. In Nigeria for instance, these challenges consist of insufficient support of intelligence to security operations, inadequate sharing of intelligence between security agents and law enforcement agencies, deficit of immediate intelligence data and analytical skills necessary for the prediction of terrorist incidents, etc.[110] In this regard, it exists a correlation between the state of security and the efficacy of intelligence activities. Intelligence by way of providing governments with appropriate resources to address all aspects of their security needs helps them forecast future terrorist plots and guard against them in record time. With the use of real-time intelligence data, terrorist threats to public or critical infrastructures can be quickly detect and interdicted. It should then be noted that the states' low concern or neglect of intelligence activities for counter-terrorism purposes clearly bears out their inability to detect and keep track of the terrorist groups' plans of attack. As far as Boko Haram and JNIM's capabilities are concerned, it's important to address their tactics of attacks before coming to their mode of weapons acquisition.

Indeed, Boko Haram uses tactics known as "armed assaults and bombing, suicide attacks, exploit of women in terrorist actions, disguising as mad people to gain unrestricted access in public places, raids on towns and villages or even taking control of entire communities."[111] For its attacks, JNIM usually makes use of rockets,

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[110] See, Ngboawaji O.N. (2013). An analysis of Intelligence Support to Security Operations in Nigeria: A Review of Some Joint Task Force Operations. *Peace and Security Review*, 5(9); Phenson U. A., Ojie P. A. et al. (2014). Essential Elements of Security and their Applications in Ensuring Stability and Integration of Nigeria. *International Journal of Politics and Good Governance*, 5(5).
[111] Pricopi M. (2016). Tactics used by the Terrorist Organization Boko Haram. *Scientific Bulletin*, 21(1), DOI: 10.1515/bsaft-2016-0035.

mortars, improvised explosive devices, suicide vehicle, small arms, etc.[112] JNIM is known for its shootings and armed assaults as tactics.[113] As of its recruitment tactics, JNIM "has access to fertile recruiting grounds and has the ability to push its narrative into communities that are already rife with conflict. In these communities, JNIM can exploit the grievances against other tribes and against the government."[114] For instance, the group takes advantages of "social cleavages between Fulani and other local groups like the Bambara and Dogon" thus resulting in ethnic tensions between these groups.[115]

When it comes to the groups' acquisition mode of weapons, Boko Haram for example, takes advantage of the porosity of borders in Nigeria and successfully trafficks "Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALWs)" within and across these borders.[116] To begin with, Nigerian law enforcement and security officials are limitedly present across the country's borders. Even the few that are sometimes deployed lack outstanding trainings and are obsoletely and inadequately equipped.[117] That being said, Boko Haram's arms trafficking activities can be perceived from two grand categories: national and transnational trafficking. Its national trafficking operations consist of smuggling arms within Nigeria from one location to another. The group's methods of national arms trafficking consist of "stocking in goods, loading in specially-adapted vehicles, hiding under cloths of couriers, and tunneling

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[112] See, BBC. (March, 2018). Burkina Faso attack: French embassy targeted in Ouagadougou. Retrieved January 11, 2021 from https://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-43257453; Reuters. (April, 2018). Militants in U.N. disguise explode car bombs, rockets at Mali bases," Retrieved January 11, 2021 from https://www.reuters.com/article/us-mali-security/militants-in-u-n-disguise-explode-car-bombs-rockets-at-mali-bases-idUSKBN1HL1BX.

[113] Zimmerer M. (2019). Terror in West Africa: A Threat Assessment of the New Al Qaeda Affiliate in Mali. *Critical Studies on Terrorism*, 12(3) pp. 491-511, https://doi.org/10.1080/17539153.2019.1599531.

[114] CK Hess M. R. (2020). Lassoing the Haboob : Countering Jama'at Nasr al-Islam wal Muslimin in Mali. Journal of European, Middle Eastern & African Affairs, 2(3), p. 28.

[115] Le Roux P. (December, 2019). Responding to the Rise in Violent Extremism in the Sahel. *Africa Center for Strategic Studies*, 3, retrieved January 12, 2021 from https://africacenter.org/publication/responding-rise-violent-extremism-sahel/

[116] See, ECOWAS. (May, 2019). ECOWAS Security Ministers to work With Nigeria and other Member States to tackle Regional Security Challenges. https://www.ecowas.int/ecowas-security-ministers-to-work-with; ECOWAS. (March, 2019). ECOWAS Reviews Guidelines to Reduce Proliferation of Small Arms and Light Weapons in the Region. https://www.ecowas.int/ecowas-reviews-guidelines-to-reduce-proliferation-of-small-arms-and-light-weapons-in-the-region/

[117] See, Onuoha F. C. (September, 2013). Porous Borders and Boko Haram's Arms Smuggling Operations in Nigeria. *Aljazeera Center for Studies*, retrieved January 11, 2021 from https://studies.aljazeera.net/en/reports/2013/09/201398104245877469.html; Onuoha F. C. (2011). Small Arms and Light Weapons Proliferation and Human Security in Nigeria. *Conflict Trends*, 1, pp. 50-56.

for arms smuggling."[118] Its arms traffickers sometimes hide SALWs in bags of goods. Heavy-duty vehicles such as trailers, trucks and lorries are used to load and transport these arms from one state or town to another.[119] As of July 12, 2013 for example, soldiers have seized in Kebbi state a petrol tanker whose fuel compartment is filled with two bombs, "three AK 47 riffles, nine AK 47 magazines, special ammunitions 790 rounds of 7.62mm, one Rocket-Propelled Grenade (RPG), and three RPG chargers" which were suspectedly destined for the group's fighters operating in the region.[120] As far as the transnational arms smuggling is concerned, it consists of moving weapons across sovereign states' borders. In so doing, Boko Haram's arms smugglers are adapted to diverse methods such as "the use of specially crafted skin or thatched bags attached to camels, donkeys and cows where arms are concealed and moved across the borders with the aid of nomadic pastoralists or herders."[121] They also rely on "merchants involved in cross-border trade to help stuff their arms and weapons in goods that are transported via heavy trucks, trailers, and Lorries." [122] Furthermore, the traffickers exploit ECOWAS Protocol on free movement of persons, goods and services to facilitate their cross-border smuggling of arms.[123]

Pertaining to JNIM's mode of weapons acquisition, its arms are smuggled from Algeria and Libya. [124] JNIM also "employed an increasing proportion of heavy weaponry from Malian government stockpiles–particularly ammunition for larger weapon systems such as rockets and artillery–as opposed to Libyan or other foreign sources."[125]

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[118] Onuoha F. C. (September, 2013). Porous Borders and Boko Haram's Arms Smuggling Operations in Nigeria. *Aljazeera Center for Studies*, retrieved January 11, 2021 from https://studies.aljazeera.net/en/reports/2013/09/201398104245877469.html

[119] Ibid.

[120] The Nation. (July, 2013). Kebbi: Army seizes petrol tanker loaded with arms. Retrieved January 11, 2021 from https://thenationonlineng.net/kebbi-army-seizes-petrol-tanker-loaded-with-arms/.

[121] Onuoha F. C. (September, 2013). Porous Borders and Boko Haram's Arms Smuggling Operations in Nigeria. *Aljazeera Center for Studies*, retrieved January 11, 2021 from https://studies.aljazeera.net/en/reports/2013/09/201398104245877469.html

[122] Ibid.

[123] ECOWAS. (May, 2019). 40 Years of Free Movement In ECOWAS. https://www.ecowas.int/40-years-of-free-movement-in-ecowas/

[124] See, Boeke S.(2016). Al Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb: Terrorism, Insurgency, or Organized Crime? *Small Wars & Insurgencies*, 27(5), pp. 914-936, https://doi.org/10.1080/09592318.2016.1208280.

[125] Foreign and Commonwealth Office. (November, 2016). Investigating Cross-Border Weapon Transfers in the Sahel, *Conflict Armament Research*, p. 30. Retrieved January 12, 2021 from https://www.conflictarm.com/reports/investigating-cross-border-weapon-transfers-in-the-sahel/.

Vulnerability Assessment of both States' Response

Assessing Nigerian government's response and the one of the Malian government to Boko Haram and JNIM respectively, amounts to evaluating their counterterrorism instruments' ability to detect and interdict terrorist attacks. Indeed, it is common understanding that the Nigerian government has failed to protect its citizens against Boko Haram insurgencies with almost no concrete counterterrorism instruments let alone their capability to guard against potential attacks. To begin with, the Nigerian government lacks strong and effective political leadership as the then President Jonathan was said to be "often poorly informed, never grasped the gravity of the threat and failed to provide consistent and coherent policy guidance to drive an effective counterinsurgency."[126] The possession of weak security institutions added to this leadership failure thus exposing the government's handicapped military has made Boko Haram gain presence and influence in the country's northwest.[127] And as if that were not enough, the already weak security institutions are worsened by "corruption in procurement and administration, poor maintenance of acquired assets, human rights violations that alienate local support, low morale among troops demoralized by inadequate support…"[128]

Even the current government's efforts to guard against Boko Haram's threats are far from being promising. For instance, a week after more than 300 school girls were abducted in Nigeria's northwest Katsina state, Boko Haram as of November 28, 2020 in the country's northeastern Borno state has orchestrated a brutal and deadly attack against agricultural workers thus taking the lives of more than 43 and kidnapping about 15 women.[129] In response to the attack, the state governor has called on the federal government to recruit foreign mercenaries in a bid to fight Boko Haram.[130] In doing so, the governor clearly shows no confidence in the federal

[126] Obasi N. (January, 2015). Nigeria's Faltering Response Emboldens Boko Haram. *International Crisis Group*, retrieved January 12, 2021 from https://www.crisisgroup.org/africa/west-africa/nigeria/nigeria-s-faltering-response-emboldens-boko-haram.
[127] Ibid.
[128] Ibid.
[129] See, BBC. (November, 2020). Dozens of farm workers killed in 'insane' Nigeria attack. Retrieved January 12, 2021 from https://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-55120638. See also, Ahmed A. (December, 2020). Nigeria's Katsina school abduction: 'How I escaped my kidnappers'. *BBC News*, retrieved January 12, 2021 from https://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-55306811.
[130] Haruna A. (November, 2020). Governor Zulum makes six recommendations to defeat Boko Haram, wants Buhari to hire mercenaries. *Premium Times*, retrieved January 12, 2021 from

government of Nigeria and its security forces when it comes to preventing and defeating Boko Haram's threats. As such, these attacks bear out the vulnerability of Nigerian government's counterterrorism measures against Boko Haram and of course show how likely successful another potential attacks from the group would be as firstly, the country's "northwest faces three key vulnerabilities: first, areas along the Nigeria-Niger border can easily serve as places where the group can take refuge", secondly "in many parts of the northwest, the state's absence has long been felt, allowing Boko Haram a foothold to maneuver", and finally "poverty, disillusion in the state, and a lack of economic opportunity make the region fertile ground for further mobilization and recruitment."[131]

When it comes to the Malian government's efforts against JNIM's threats, it is important to mention foremost the support that the government benefits from the G5 Sahel, a sub-regional organization created in 2014 as result of an intergovernmental cooperation between Chad, Burkina Faso, Mauritania, Niger, and Mali for the purpose of responding *inter alia* to security challenges in the Sahel. The G5 Sahel launched in 2017 a Joint Force, the "Force Conjointe du G5 Sahel, FC-G5S" which comprises at least 5,000 troops across the Sahel and supported by European Union and a coalition of 26 countries.[132] Apart from this regional effort, the terrorist threats in the Sahel have prompted some international responses such as the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA) and France's "Barkhane operation".[133] As part of national responses, the "Operation Dambé" is launched in 2017 by the Malian armed forces in a bid to counter insurgency threats.[134] The operation is made up of 4,000 soldiers and covers the country's northern and central region.[135] The operation is reinforced in 2019 with patrols carried out by mobile units throughout the country and across its border with

https://www.premiumtimesng.com/news/headlines/428771-governor-zulum-makes-six-recommendations-to-defeat-boko-haram-wants-buhari-to-hire-mercenaries.html.

[131] Verjee A., Kwaja C. (December, 2020). Nigeria's Security Failures: The Link Between EndSARS and Boko Haram. *United States Institute of Peace*, retrieved January 12, 2021 from https://www.usip.org/publications/2020/12/nigerias-security-failures-link-between-endsars-and-boko-haram.

[132] Africa Center for Strategic Studies. (March, 2019). A Review of Major Regional Security Efforts in the Sahel. Retrieved January 13, 2021 from https://africacenter.org/spotlight/review-regional-security-efforts-sahel/.

[133] Ibid.

[134] See, Le Roux P. (December, 2019). Responding to the Rise in Violent Extremism in the Sahel. Africa Center for Strategic Studies. Retrieved January 13, 2021 from https://africacenter.org/publication/responding-rise-violent-extremism-sahel/.

[135] Ibid.

Niger and Burkina Faso. [136] But according to a security expert with a practical knowledge of Malian security issues, "the fight against terrorism in the Sahel is not effective at all. Fighting terrorism is not only done by military means, rather, it is an everyday struggle that must be waged […]." [137] That is despite these efforts, the terrorism threats in Mali are still recurrent and it would be negligent to come up with the idea that the Malian government's measures are able to effectively guard against potential attacks on its soil.

Impact Assessment of Boko Haram and JNIM's Threats

Boko Haram's deadly attacks have severely impacted human security in Nigeria as far as people's basic needs such as health, food and nutrition, education, and shelter are concerned. The health of the people in Nigeria has been damaged as of the beginning of Boko Haram's insurgencies in 2002. Boko Haram since then has been claiming thousands of lives and causing injuries on a lot of people in the northern part of the country. The overwhelming numbers of injured people lead sometimes to the overcrowding of hospitals and health care centers thus making their services difficult to be accessed by the general-public. Boko Haram has even destroyed several hospitals and health care facilities which has led some health workers to flee their offices. [138] The normal life patterns of the people affected by these insurgencies are generally disrupted as they may still have memories of what they went through. As far as food and nutrition are concerned, these insurgencies have had bad repercussions on agriculture as some of Nigeria's food-growing areas like Yobe, Adamawa and Borno states actively contributing in the nationwide production of rice, cowpeas, millet, onions, tomatoes, yams, sorghums, corns, fish, livestock, etc are affected with the farmers abandoning their farms in order to avoid being attacked. [139] It is also difficult to transport and distribute food across some parts of these areas as trade routes are sometimes disrupted by the insurgencies thus causing

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[136] Ibid.
[137] Peace Lab. (February, 2020). ''The Fight against Terrorism in the Sahel Is Not Effective at All'' Retrieved January 13, 2021 from https://peacelab.blog/2020/02/the-fight-against-terrorism-in-the-sahel-is-not-effective-at-all.

[138] See, Obi F. A., Eboreime E. (May, 2017). How Boko Haram is devastating health services in North-East Nigeria. *The Conversation*. Retrieved January 15, 2021 from https://theconversation.com/how-boko-haram-is-devastating-health-services-in-north-east-nigeria-65751.
[139] George J., Adelaja A. O., et al. (2019). Armed Conflict and Food Insecurity: Evidence from Boko Haram's Attacks. *American Journal of Agricultural Economics*. DOI: 10.1093/ajae/aaz039.

inflation in Nigerian economy.[140] When it comes to the educational sector, schools and colleges have been affected with teachers and students sometimes injured, abducted or killed by Boko Haram insurgents thus having negative influence on children's access to education.[141] Concerning the shelter, more than two (2) millions of people were displaced including an exceeding number of 240,000 refugees who have fled to neighboring countries due to Boko Haram's continuous insurgencies.[142]

With regard to the negative impact of JNIM's threats in Mali, it should be noted that civilians, traditional chiefs, local authorities, and primarily the militaries and armed forces are the main targets of JNIM's attacks. The group has been using targeted killings against local leaders and vocal citizens who are opposed to its jihadist rule.[143] As part of its opposition to the secular civil law, JNIM has eliminated government taxes and customs in territories under its control and burnt out most of health centers and schools with negative impact on the youths and their families' lives.[144] Due to the insurgency, about 1,175 schools have been closed with 352,500 children affected.[145] Youths have difficult access to education and young women with limited access to basic medical support or treatment during their pregnancy or childbirth. Terrorist insurgencies have increased the level of poverty and the number of displaced people in Mali. According to the United Nations, "nearly 240,000 people are internally displaced" in Mali as of July 2020.[146] Terrorist insurgencies as well as the jihadist rules that come with have had bad repercussions on economic

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[140] Eme O., Onyishi A., et al. (2014). Food Insecurity in Nigeria: A Thematic Exposition. *Arabian Journal of Business and Management Review*, 4(1).

[141] See, Ahmed A. (December, 2020). Nigeria's Katsina school abduction: 'How I escaped my kidnappers'. *BBC News*. Retrieved January 15, 2021 from https://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-55306811. See also, Global Coalition to Protect Education from Attack. (May, 2018). Education under Attack 2018-Nigeria. Retrieved January 15, 2021 from https://www.refworld.org/docid/5be9430613.html.

[142] See, ECOWAS. (December, 2016). ECOWAS Commission assists People internally displaced due to Boko Haram attacks in Maiduguri. https://www.ecowas.int/ecowas-commission-assists-people-internally-displaced-due-to-boko-haram-attacks-in-maiduguri/; U.S. Department of State Bureau of Counterterrorism. (2020). *Country Reports on Terrorism 2019*. Retrieved January 15, 2021 from https://www. state.gov/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/Country-Reports-onTerrorism-2019-2.pdf.

[143] UNICRI & ICCT. (October, 2020). When the Music Stops: The Impact of Terrorism on Malian Youth. *MERIT Project*, p. 42. Retrieved January 16, 2021 from https://icct.nl/publication/when-the-music-stops-the-impact-of-terrorism-on-malian-youth/.

[144] Ibid. p. 46.

[145] Dewast L. (January, 2020). How West Africa is under threat from Islamist militants. BBC News, retrieved January 16, 2021 from https://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-51061229.

[146] Security Council. (July, 2020). Situation in West Africa, Sahel 'Extremely Volatile' as Terrorists Exploit Ethnic Animosities. Retrieved January 15, 2021 from https://www.un.org/press/en/2020/sc14245.doc.htm.

activities of Malians such as agricultural productions, commercial activities, goods distribution and transportation, etc.[147]

2.3.2. Historical Tracking of Boko Haram and JNIM's Risk

JNIM and Boko Haram have evolved over time with considerable changes in the perception of their terrorism risk and threat profile. Before 2009, Boko Haram was perceived with no imminent terrorism risk as its activities were peaceful. It's in 2009 that its threats to human security have become a concern for Nigerian authorities after it had confronted some security agencies thus leaving at least 800 of its insurgents dead. Mohammed Yusuf, Boko Haram's leader was also reported to be killed in the police custody.[148] Since then, some popular beliefs have tried to explain the rationale behind the group's radicalization and emergence.

These popular explanations are made up of conspiracy theories defending the facts that Boko Haram is sponsored by northern politicians to turn Nigeria 'ungovernable' and also a support from President Jonathan in a bid to either to gain endorsements from the south especially the Christians or to destroy the north as well as its populations ahead of the country's 2015 election to elect a new President.[149] Then the failed state rhetoric with the belief that "Boko Haram is simply a symptom that the overarching Nigerian state has failed, or at best, is failing […] in the provision of security, welfare or improving citizens' standards of living."[150] Another popular explanation of the changes that have occurred in Boko Haram's risk profile is related to poverty and the lack of good governance as according to Jideofor Adibe, these factors highlight the unmet needs of Nigerian people, particularly, the northern populations mostly left unemployed and suffering from some elements of Ted Gurr's "Relative deprivation".[151] Frustration-aggression hypothesis is also part of these explanations highlighted by Jideofor Adibe as it underlines how the frustration

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[147] UNICRI & ICCT. (October, 2020). When the Music Stops: The Impact of Terrorism on Malian Youth. *MERIT Project*, p. 48. Retrieved January 16, 2021 from https://icct.nl/publication/when-the-music-stops-the-impact-of-terrorism-on-malian-youth/.
[148] Adibe J. (2014). Explaining the Emergence of Boko Haram. *Africa In Focus-Brookings Press*. Retrieved January 18, 2021 from https://www.brookings.edu/blog/africa-in-focus/2014/05/06/explaining-the-emergence-of-boko-haram/.
[149] Ibid.
[150] Ibid.
[151] Adibe J. (2014). Explaining the Emergence of Boko Haram. *Africa In Focus-Brookings Press*. Retrieved January 18, 2021 from https://www.brookings.edu/blog/africa-in-focus/2014/05/06/explaining-the-emergence-of-boko-haram/.

perceived by a part of Nigeria's northern populations might be a catalyst that had fueled Boko Haram's aggression. An illustration that more or less makes this hypothesis relevant in Nigeria is an analysis from the then Governor of the Nigeria's Central Bank who according to Adibe, partly links the concerning rise of the group's aggression with an uneven distribution formula of the country's revenues thus disadvantaging the northern populations and sparking grievances among them as 13% derivation is given to the states that produce oil.[152] It should then be noted that this perspective may be partly but not totally true as Boko Haram's insurgency is not generalized across the north.

Besides these popular explanations that are obviously questionable, it's important to stress that Boko Haram has evolved over time in terms of its capacity to reincarnate itself. Indeed, Boko Haram has moved forward from "being a group fighting the Nigerian state, to targeting Christians, attacking Muslims it regards as infidels and collaborators, and now, taking the fight to the military."[153] The group is far from being a monolithic organization as it has given rise to different fractions of which one known as the "Islamic State West African Province (ISWAP)" is under the leadership of "Abu Abdullah Ibn Umar al-Barnawi" and another one whose leader is Abubakar Shekau. "Abu Abdullah Ibn Umar al-Barnawi" is less extremist than Abubakar Shekau when it comes to his interpretation of who should be the targets of their killings. According to a report from Jacob Zenn, he advocated for the targeting of churches in a bid to prevent 'Muslim lands' from being 'christianized' thus sparing Muslims who are not actively opposed to their ideology.[154] He is also said to be more focused on military targets rather than civilians.[155] Unlike the former, Abubakar Shekau has a different understanding of how their insurgency should be. He is "well-known for his taunting, bloody videos, and his kidnapping of the Chibok

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[152] Ibid.

[153] Adibe J. (November, 2019). How Boko Haram has evolved over the past ten years. *The Conversation*, retrieved January 18, 2021 from https://theconversation.com/how-boko-haram-has-evolved-over-the-past-ten-years-126436.

[154] Zenn J. (September, 2016). Making Sense of Boko Haram's different Fractions: Who, How and Why? *African Arguments*, retrieved January 19, 2021 from https://africanarguments.org/2016/09/making-sense-of-boko-harams-different-factions/.

[155] Ibid.

school girls in 2014."[156] That is, his leadership style has endorsed the indiscriminate killings of civilians which also include his 'fellow' Muslims.[157]

The threats to human security posed by JNIM in Mali have evolved in a manner that is far different from Boko Haram's insurgency. JNIM has put up divisions amidst local communities at the heart of its operations.[158] Inspired by Al-Qaida's *modus operandi* related to a community-based approach, JNIM has taken advantage of grievances amidst ethnic groups to fuel communal conflicts and transform thereof emerged local militants into allies by portraying itself to them as a communal defender.[159] While still constituting a constant threat in Mali, JNIM has also expanded its jihadist operations to Burkina Faso, Niger thus posing a direct threat to other West African countries such as Cote d'Ivoire and Togo.[160]

2.3.3. Both States' Risk Mitigation Projects

In line with the evaluation of potential reduction of the aforementioned terrorism risk, it's crucial to tap on the Malian and Nigerian governments' respective future solutions or projects. To begin with, the Malian government is committed to dialogue with JNIM alongside other jihadist militants. This project has been endorsed by the African Union's Commissioner for Peace and Security, Smail Chergui and the Secretary-General of the United Nations, Antonio Guterres.[161] It should be noted that such a move has already shown success in the past through the release–by way of

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[156] Campbell. (April, 2019). Boko Haram evolves and persists in Northeast Nigeria. Council On Foreign Relations, retrieved January 19, 2021 from https://www.cfr.org/blog/boko-haram-evolves-and-persists-northeast-nigeria.

[157] Ibid.

[158] See, International Crisis Group. (July, 2016). Central Mali: An Uprising in the Making? Retrieved January 20, 2021 from https://www.crisisgroup.org/africa/west-africa/mali/central-mali-uprising-making; Berger F. (June, 2019). Jihadist violence and communal divisions fuel worsening conflict in Mali and wider Sahel. *International Institute for Strategic Studies*, retrieved January 20, 2021 from https://www.iiss.org/blogs/analysis/2019/06/conflicts-in-mali; Aljazeera. (August, 2019). Mali in Crisis: The Fight between Dogon and Fulani. Retrieved January 20, 2021 from https://www.aljazeera.com/program/episode/2019/8/24/mali-in-crisis-the-fight-between-the-dogon-and-fulani.

[159] Weiss C. (July, 2018). Analysis: Jihadist Exploitation of Communal Violence in Mali. *FDD's Long War Journal*, retrieved January 20, 2021 from https://www.longwarjournal.org/archives/2018/07/analysis-jihadist-exploitation-of-communal-violence-in-mali.php.

[160] France 24. (May, 2020). Worried Togo finds itself on front line of Sahel's jihadist War. Agence France-Presse, retrieved January 20, 2021 from https://www.france24.com/en/20200521-worried-togo-finds-itself-on-front-line-of-sahel-s-jihadist-war.

[161] Le Temps. (October, 2020). Sahel: Redéfinir notre engagement collectif. Retrieved January 21, 2021 from https://www.letemps.ch/opinions/sahel-redefinir-engagement-collectif; TheDefensePost. (October, 2020). Dialogue Possible With Certain Sahel Jihadists: UN Chief. Retrieved January 21, 2021 from https://www.thedefensepost.com/2020/10/19/dialogue-sahel-jihadists/.

negotiation–of Soumaila Cissé, the Malian opposition leader alongside three foreign nationals abducted by JNIM. In this regard, a broader dialogue and negotiation between JNIM and the government of Mali has a chance to help achieve stability as in keeping with Smail Chergui and Antonio Guterres' perspective, there is a critical need to engage jihadist militants or armed non-state actors in dialogues leading to negotiations that help curb the violence.[162]

Albeit dialogue with these militants is said to be a will of Malian people, a potential obstruction to this move needs to be raised as the French government– known as an important actor in the fight against jihadist groups in the Sahel–has firstly opposed this measure before it had mentioned a possibility of being represented 'legitimately' by the Malian government.[163] Thus, despite JNIM's unclear intentions and uncertain outcomes and the limits of national, regional and international military measures so far implemented in the Sahel, exploration of dialogues and negotiations with JNIM is likely to mitigate terrorism risk in Mali and alleviate the affected local communities.[164] But what the future holds for Mali is highly uncertain as far as the outcomes of these dialogues are concerned. Because a potential fragile negotiation process with JNIM lacking more or less compromise can lead to the escalation in violence. And this lack of compromise is likely to stem from potential jeopardy from the French government which can imperil possible *bona fides* or goodwill eventually built up between the Malian government and JNIM. An

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[162] Ibid.

[163] Carayol R. (December, 2020). Le Mali contre la France ? Le défi des négociations avec « les terroristes ». *Orient XXI*, retrieved January 21, 2021 from https://orientxxi.info/magazine/le-mali-contre-la-france-le-defi-des-negociations-avec-les-terroristes,4321; Le Figaro. (November, 2020). Sahel : «avec les terroristes, on ne discute pas», déclare Emmanuel Macron. Retrieved January 21, 2021 from https://www.lefigaro.fr/flash-actu/sahel-avec-les-terroristes-on-ne-discute-pas-declare-macron-20201120; AFP. (October, 2020). Le dialogue n'est pas possible avec les jihadistes, selon la France. *VOA Afrique*, retrieved January 21, 2021 from https://www.voaafrique.com/a/le-dialogue-n-est-pas-possible-avec-les-jihadistes-au-mali-selon-le-drian/5635804.html; Perelman M., Baché D. ''Le dialogue avec les terroristes est une volonté des Maliens'', assure le Premier Ministre du Mali. *France 24*, retrieved January 21, 2021 from https://www.france24.com/fr/%C3%A9missions/l-entretien/20201203-le-dialogue-avec-les-terroristes-est-une-volont%C3%A9-des-maliens-assure-le-premier-ministre-du-mali; AFP. (December, 2020). Sahel: Le Chef d'État-major français admet la possibilité d'un dialogue avec ''un ennemi''. Africa Radio, retrieved January 21, 2021 from https://www.africaradio.com/news/sahel-le-chef-d-etat-major-francais-admet-la-possibilite-d-un-dialogue-avec-un-ennemi-177247.

[164] See, Thurston A. (April, 2020). France should give Mali Space to negotiate with the Jihadists. War On The Rocks, retrieved January 21, 2021 from https://warontherocks.com/2020/04/france-should-give-mali-space-to-negotiate-with-jihadists/; International Crisis Group. (May, 2019). Speaking with the "Bad Guys": Toward Dialogue with Central Mali's Jihadists. Retrieved January 21, 2021 from https://www.crisisgroup.org/africa/sahel/mali/276-speaking-bad-guys-toward-dialogue-central-malis-jihadists.

exaggerated and uncontrolled French military operation can, for instance, jeopardize any arrangement mutually agreed upon between both parties. The Malian government will therefore be expected to be watchful and retain its military forces from engaging any uncontrolled and unrestrained violence that may complicate or endanger negotiation efforts.

There exists almost no public information related to plausible risk mitigation projects from Nigerian government vis-à-vis Boko Haram insurgency. But it is worth emphasizing the government's rehabilitation of insurgents known as Operation Safe Corridor (OSC). The OSC programme is established in April 2016 and aims to rehabilitate captured or surrendered Boko Haram insurgents and get them reintegrated back into society after completing several training sessions related to vocational, de-radicalization, civic programmes, etc.[165] In the year 2020, about two thousand Boko Haram and ISWAP fighters have surrendered to benefit from the OSC programme.[166] That is to say, the programme, in the long run, can help defeat Boko Haram in the sense that its fighters abandoning the insurgency contribute to its demobilization and, as such, would no more be able to provide logistical supports to the group. In précis, this journey of giving up Boko Haram insurgency to rehabilitation programmes is likely to reduce the number of fighters operating within the group.

But some concerns need to be raised regarding the insurgents' reasons for abandoning Boko Haram which can be complex to understand. While these reasons can be "driven by different stories of circumstance, survival and desperation" or related to Boko Haram's "brutality and internal rivalries", it would be necessary to dig deeply and understand the real motivation of the insurgents joining Boko Haram in order to be sure that there is high probability that they will be totally de-radicalized after being rehabilitated and don't represent an imminent security risk or threat to society.[167] Also considering the role that a bad socio-economic situation plays in youth motivation to join terrorist groups, it will be crucial to provide jobs

[165] Ohikere, O. (2016, April). Nigerian military creates rehab program for Boko Haram fighters. *World*, https://world.wng.org/2016/04/nigerian_military_creates_rehab_program_for_boko_haram_fighters.

[166] Nwezeh K. (March, 2020). Nigeria: 2,000 Boko Haram, ISWAP Fighters Surrendered Since 2015 - Army. *All Africa*, retrieved January 21, 2021 from https://allafrica.com/stories/202003060126.html.

[167] Akum F., Samuel M. (May, 2020). Understanding the Dangerous Journey from Boko Haram to Rehabilitation. *Institute for Security Studies*, retrieved January 21, 2021 from https://issafrica.org/iss-today/understanding-the-dangerous-journey-from-boko-haram-to-rehabilitation.

opportunities to the rehabilitated insurgents in a bid to guard against any grievance that can jeopardize their safe and secure reintegration into mainstream society.

2.4. Conclusion

This chapter has started with identification of corruption, authoritarianism, and imposition of religion in politics as some potential risk factors of terrorism within the ECOWAS region. The potential grievances that go along with these risk factors have the potential to be exploited by terrorist groups to promote their ideology and recruit new members among the grieved or radicalized individuals. These risk factors have been determined by means of insights from the relative deprivation theory. Later, the chapter provided an assessment of the terrorism risk and threat posed by Boko Haram in Nigeria and Jamaat Nusrat al-Islam wal-Muslimin in Mali. The assessment has exploited the three major components of the TRAM methodology. Firstly, the criticality assessment addressed some western values and interests to which terrorist groups are ideologically hostile; the threat assessment has focused on Boko and JNIM's capabilities such as their tactics of attack and mode of weapons acquisition; the vulnerability assessment has raised concerns on the ability of Nigerian and Malian governments' counterterrorism measures to effectively prevent terrorist attacks; the impact assessment addressed Boko Haram and JNIM's threats to human security and the damage they cause to people's basic needs such as health, food and nutrition, education, and shelter. Regarding the second component, the historical tracking of JNIM and Boko Haram's risk described how both groups have evolved over time and the changes that occur in the perception of their terrorism risk and threat profile. The third component embodying the risk mitigation offered an evaluation of some efforts made by Malian and Nigerian governments   as well as their future projects to reduce terrorism risk and its threat. Nonetheless, it is necessary to point out the ECOWAS' willingness to rethink its Early Warning System and make it a key component in its prevention of the terrorism threats weighing on its Member States as a whole.[168] This concern will be addressed in the next chapter through an analysis of the ECOWAS Early Warning and Response Network regarding terrorism risk and threat assessment.

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[168] ECOWAS. (2019, October). ECOWAS and Scientific Community Assess ECOWARN System. https://www.ecowas.int/ecowas-and-scientific-community-assess-ecowarn-system/.

CHAPTER THREE

TERRORISM RISK AND THREAT ASSESSMENT: ECOWARN AND THE POSSIBILITIES FOR REORIENTATION

3.1. Introduction

This chapter has three sections. The first section comprising several sub-sections will offer an overview of the ECOWAS Early Warning System while underlining its major focus on conflict prevention over the terrorism's. By offering insights on the benefits of early warning systems in counterterrorism field, the section will also establish a connection between this lack of ECOWARN's focus on terrorism prevention and the ECOWAS' inability to make use of its counterterrorism strategy for the purpose of firmly combatting terrorism in West Africa. The second section will put forward a reorientation of ECOWARN in a bid to meet necessary requirements for terrorism risk and threat assessment within ECOWAS region. The third and last section will discuss the challenges related to the reorientation while providing some perspectives.

3.2. ECOWARN: AN OVERVIEW OF ITS FOCUS ON INTER-STATE CONFLICT PREVENTION OVER TERRORISM'S

As a result of the changes that have occurred over time in its challenges especially the dynamics of international system with the Cold War demise and the spread of the crisis throughout the sub-region, ECOWAS has extended its mandate and showed commitments in security issues. These commitments have begun in 1999 with the establishment of the "ECOWAS Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management, Resolution, Peacekeeping and Security" whose revised Treaty and the Protocol's article 58 has set-up an observation system for peace and security thus known as ECOWAS Early Warning and Response Network (ECOWARN).[169]

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[169] See, ECOWAS Commission. (n.d.). Revised Treaty. https://www.ecowas.int/wp-content/uploads/2015/01/Revised-treaty.pdf; Malam, B. (2015). The Challenges of Building Regional Security Architecture: An Appraisal of ECOWAS Early Warning System. *Humanities and Social Sciences Review*, 4(1), p. 132.

3.2.1. ECOWARN and Inter-state Conflict Prevention

Located at ECOWAS Commission in Abuja, ECOWARN is an observation system and monitoring tool made up of four zonal bureaus established in Cotonou (Benin), Monrovia (Liberia), Ouagadougou (Burkina-Faso) and Banjul (Gambia). It purposely collects, compiles, archives, manages, processes and shares on daily basis information related to human security issues whose analysis enables the community to back its member states' policymaking ability and real-time preventive response through sound recommendations as well as support in the management of delicate conflict and instability situations.[170] ECOWARN mostly uses open source data with more than 150 thematic indicators that are classified into six (6) different sectors which help identify and analyze vulnerabilities within ECOWAS region. To mention a few, there are the security and the crime & criminality sectors. The security sector, for instance, has fifteen (15) indicators such as *aggression, hate speech, terror financing*, etc. Regarding the crime & criminality sector, it is made up of eleven (11) thematic indicators such as *trafficking goods/drugs, gang violence, cybercrime*, etc. These indicators are tracked throughout the field monitors that are located within each of the zones and who provide necessary data on the security and peace situation across the territory of the member states. The provided information includes but not limited to situation reports, daily highlights, incident reports, monthly national policy brief, thematic reports, and security reports. ECOWARN is operated by ECOWAS Directorate of Early Warning and relies on a critical partnership with various actors such as the Member States' representatives, research institutes, and Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) like the "West Africa Network for Peace-building (WANEP), the West African Civil Society Forum (WACSOF)", etc.[171] For instance, WANEP– which is known for its prominent involvement into the establishment of ECOWARN–has several focal points in each member states of the community.[172] With WANEP's regional reach and its comprehensive early warning reports, imminent threats to security are determined and analyzed in real-time, and

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[170] Malam, B. (2015). The Challenges of Building Regional Security Architecture: An Appraisal of ECOWAS Early Warning System. *Humanities and Social Sciences Review*, 4(1), p. 133.
[171] ECOWAS Commission. (n.d.). Directorate of Early Warning. http://www.comm.ecowas.int/departments/political-affairs-peace-security/directorate-of-early-warning/
[172] See, Eze C.B., Frimpong O.B. (2021). Contributions of Early Warning to the African Peace and Security Architecture: The Experience of the West Africa Network for Peacebuilding (WANEP). In: McNamee T., Muyangwa M. (eds) The State of Peacebuilding in Africa. Palgrave Macmillan, Cham. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-46636-7_11

recommendations are provided for early actions and mitigation. Moreover, the Directorate of Early Warning also relies on an important collaboration with other Regional Economic Communities (RECs) and the African Union (AU) in line with the setting-up of the "Continental Early Warning System (CEWS)".[173] The system's modus operandi is described in the methodology below:

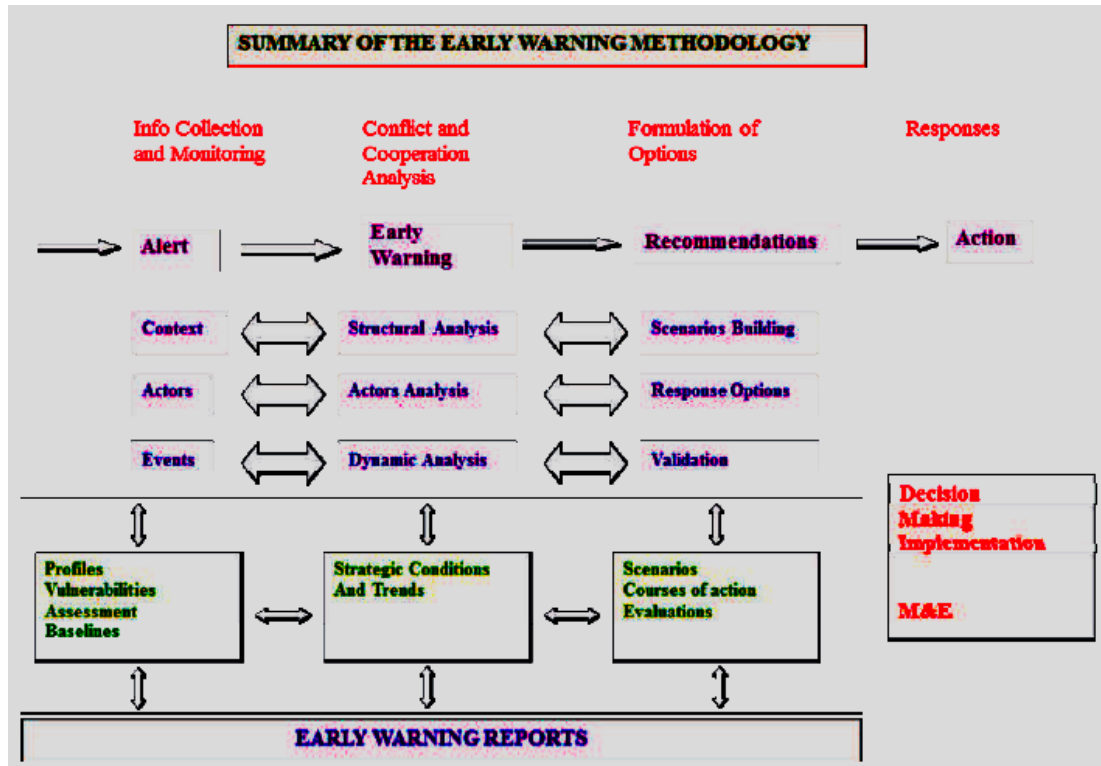**SUMMARY OF THE EARLY WARNING METHODOLOGY**

Figure 3: Summary of the Early Warning Methodology[174]

The ECOWAS Early Warning System mostly focuses on armed conflict prevention with almost no effort to assess terrorism risks and threats. To begin with, ECOWARN monitors incidents and gathers necessary information from member countries with conflict trends by way of the study of some pre-defined risks and alert factors or indicators.[175] This information is initially analyzed and then sent to the Abuja-based Observation and Monitoring Center in order to be thoroughly assessed by experts before it's been disseminated to the decision-makers at ECOWAS Commission, particularly, the Department of Political Affairs, Peace and Security for

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[173] Ibid.
[174] Malam, B. (2015). The Challenges of Building Regional Security Architecture: An Appraisal of ECOWAS Early Warning System. *Humanities and Social Sciences Review*, 4(1), p. 136.
[175] Ibid.

the implementation of early measures or preventive actions.[176] Through ECOWARN, the sources of conflict, its impact and the results of the deployed actions are continuously monitored and evaluated. In précis, ECOWARN helps the community detect risk factors that are likely to disrupt human security and spark violent conflicts. In so doing, conflict escalation patterns are identified in a bid to anticipate potential scenarios that can occur in the future, and address them with preventive measures.[177] The following synthesis depicts the role of Early Warning (EW) in the decision making process for conflict prevention within ECOWAS member countries:
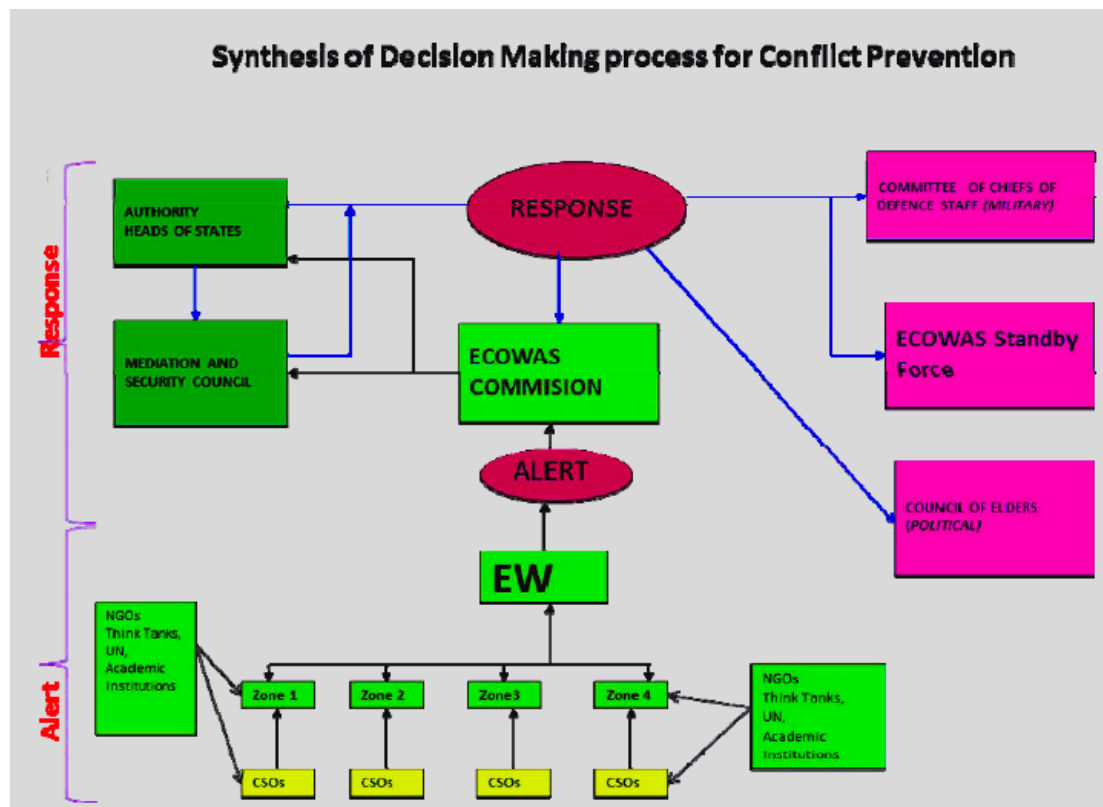

Figure 4: Synthesis of Decision-Making Process for Conflict Prevention[178]

In a nutshell, the mandates and modus operandi of ECOWAS Early Warning system are all about conflict prevention regardless of the insights and benefits that an early warning system might provide in counterterrorism.

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[176] ECOWAS Commission. (n.d.). Directorate of Early Warning. http://www.comm.ecowas.int/departments/political-affairs-peace-security/directorate-of-early-warning/

[177] See, Souaré, I. K. (2007). Conflict Prevention and Early Warning Mechanisms in West Africa: A Critical Assessment of Progress. *African Security Review*, 16(30, pp. 96-109. DOI: 10.1080/10246029.2007.9627435

[178] Malam, B. (2015). The Challenges of Building Regional Security Architecture: An Appraisal of ECOWAS Early Warning System. *Humanities and Social Sciences Review*, 4(1), p. 134.

3.2.2. Benefits and Advantages of Early Warning System in Counterterrorism

It's no secret that early warning systems get less visibility and attention in counterterrorism discourse because of terrorism whose signs are not always easier to detect as opposed to the ones of violent conflicts that are relatively easier to observe and monitor. Still, the necessity of an early warning system in counterterrorism is not a myth as it does exist in literature.

3.2.2.1. Review of the Literature

An early warning system is of premiere importance in counterterrorism as it can help warn law enforcement agents and intelligence organizations on any unusual activities that are likely to end up in terrorist threats.[179] Likewise, an early warning system aimed at counterterrorism has the potential to grasp and keep track of the organizational and structural patterns of a given terrorist group as well as its networks on national, regional and international stage.[180] As such, an early warning system for counterterrorism can be defined as the timely dissemination of necessary and valid information on the likelihood for a given act of terrorism or violent extremism to be delivered by a specific terror group or individual.[181] The system can be made up of three major elements such as the *input*, the *process*, and the *output*.[182] The input component consists of the collection of required information mainly comprising signs, indicators, or clues for the purpose of generating early warnings in line with the probability for an attack to occur.[183] As far as the process part is concerned, the data acquired from the input component undergo some processing and analysis steps in a bid to be easily classified whether into structural, triggering, or accelerator factors.

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[179] Qureshi, P.A.R., Memon, N. & Wiil, U.K. (2010). EWAS: Modeling Application for Early Detection of Terrorist Threats. In: Memon N., Alhajj R. (eds). From Sociology to Computing in Social Networks. *Springer*, p. 141. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-7091-0294-7_8
[180] Ibid., p. 135.
[181] Alam, R. H., Priyanto, S., Mulyana, M. (2020). Early Warning and Early Response for Preventing Violent Extremism in Indonesia: Building Local-Level Collaborative Networks. Proceedings of the 2nd ICS Universitas Mataram International Conference: Countering Radicalism & Terrorism in the Digital Era-Reshaping a Global Peace Community, p. 8. http://dx.doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.3757619
[182] Ibid.
[183] Ibid.

The *structural factors* encompass any "fundamental aspects of community life that provide a context or background for the emergence of violent extremism" whereas the *accelerator factors* are made up of "specific events or developments that can increase beliefs, resources, and acts of violent extremism", and with triggering factors being all about some "particular events that serve as a catalyst for violence to erupt."[184] In a logic of Ted Gurr's *Relative Deprivation Theory*, the structural factors can be illustrated by social injustices, poverty, discrimination, welfare differences and economic disparities between the *haves* and *have-nots*, corruption, weak system of law enforcement, lack of democratic culture, marginalization, prolonged ethnical, tribal or religious conflicts, the decrease of trust in state institutions, etc. Illustrations of accelerating factors are embedded in the terrorist groups' various capabilities such as their "resources, easy access to weapons and explosives, the development of communication and information technology, the availability of enclaves that provide support (including protection) for violent extremism groups, the spread of hate speech justified by religious teachings, the construction of narratives that justify acts of violence to achieve socio-political changes."[185] The triggering factors can be exemplified through "violent incidents and terror attacks that occurred in other countries, the arrest of terrorists, certain moments used as ritual moments for doing violence, the use of political events, such as general elections and protests."[186] The analysis and processing of collected data into different factors pave the way for the output element which is all about disseminating the results (warnings) to state institutions like intelligence communities or law enforcement agencies.

Nonetheless, an early warning system be it for conflicts prevention or counterterrorism purpose, needs to be supplemented by an early response system in a bid to be efficient and effective. According to the *Indonesian Institute for Society Empowerment* (INSEP), an early response system for counterterrorism or countering violent extremism stands for any "immediate and appropriate action taken to prevent the development of violent extremism groups and the occurrence of violent acts

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[184] Ibid.

[185] Alam, R. H., Priyanto, S., Mulyana, M. (2020). Early Warning and Early Response for Preventing Violent Extremism in Indonesia: Building Local-Level Collaborative Networks. Proceedings of the 2nd ICS Universitas Mataram International Conference: Countering Radicalism & Terrorism in the Digital Era-Reshaping a Global Peace Community, p. 8. http://dx.doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.3757619

[186] Ibid.

committed by these violent extremism groups."[187] Keeping with the same source, and without losing sight on the fact that the typology of an early response is determined based on specific events and conditions, the *repressive* and *persuasive* approaches can be enumerated. Indeed, a high level of threat perceived from a given terrorist or violent extremist organization requires a repressive approach as response while a low or moderate threat level would entail a persuasive approach. The following figure sheds light on the two approaches vis-à-vis some indicators and the level of their threat:

Level of Threat	Indicators	Response Approach
Very high	Radical group members are ready to carry out attacks/violence: • already have a plan and target of attack, • have prepared weapons/explosives	Repressive
High	• Radical group members have come to believe: the use of violence as a legitimate way to fight for their aspirations • isolate themselves from family and people outside the group • view people outside their group as enemies and could become targets of attack	Repressive
Moderate	A person or a group of persons join radical groups and participate in campaigning for radical narratives	Persuasive
Low	A person or a group of persons began to agree with the radical propaganda and narratives	Persuasive
Very low	A person or a group of persons exposed to radical propaganda and narratives, among other things: • hate speech based on ethnicity, religion, race and intergroup • continuously questioning the pillars of nationality and showing a desire to replace them (in Indonesia case: Pancasila, 1945 constitution, Bhinneka Tunggal Ika, NKRI)	Persuasive

Figure 5: Early Response Approaches by Levels of Threat[188]

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[187] Mufid, S.A. (2019). The Handbook of the Early Warning and Early Response System for the Prevention of Violent Extremism. *INSEP*. Cited by: Alam, R. H., Priyanto, S., Mulyana, M. (2020). Early Warning and Early Response for Preventing Violent Extremism in Indonesia: Building Local-Level Collaborative Networks. Proceedings of the 2nd ICS Universitas Mataram International Conference: Countering Radicalism & Terrorism in the Digital Era-Reshaping a Global Peace Community, p. 9. http://dx.doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.3757619

[188] Mufid, S.A. (2019). The Handbook of the Early Warning and Early Response System for the Prevention of Violent Extremism. INSEP. Cited by: Alam, R. H., Priyanto, S., Mulyana, M. (2020). Early Warning and Early Response for Preventing Violent Extremism in Indonesia: Building Local-Level Collaborative Networks. Proceedings of the 2nd ICS Universitas Mataram International Conference: Countering Radicalism & Terrorism in the Digital Era-Reshaping a Global Peace Community, p. 9. http://dx.doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.3757619

Besides, there are numerous counterterrorism-related early warning (and response) systems around the world.

3.2.2.2. Typical Cases of Counterterrorism-related Early Warning Systems

There exist some initiatives related to early warning systems that are developed in several countries for the purpose of counterterrorism. To begin with, the *Indonesian Institute for Society Empowerment* (*INSEP*) has initiated in 2019 an "*Early Warning and Early Response System for the Prevention of Violent Extremism (EWERS-PVE)*" which is regarded as a tremendous effort in backing the government's existing measures in terms of terrorism and violent extremism prevention in Indonesia.[189] In Japan, both "*IHI Corporation and IHI Inspection & Instrumentation Co., Ltd.*" have designed a "*CBRN Early-Warning System*" for the early and real-time detection of *Chemical*, *Biological*, *Radiological* and *Nuclear* terrorism threats. That is, the system provides necessary information for terrorism prevention as well as safe evacuation guidelines for the security of people, critical public infrastructures, significant events, etc.[190] The success of the system as well as its failure rely on its communication capabilities as starting from the detection of a given terrorism threat until its elimination, it (the system) is set to enable an alarm that simultaneously sends information to a control room for the planification of the evacuation process.[191]

Besides, the *U.S. Department of Homeland Security* has launched a warning system for the purpose of being able to predict and detect on social media domestic terrorism threats like that of 'January 6, 2021 attack on U.S. Capitol' that could be missed by intelligence and law enforcement agencies.[192] In précis, the system aims to "identify emerging narratives as early as possible and assess whether those narratives are likely to influence acts of violence and how fast they're spreading across multiple platforms."[193] Prior to this system, there are plenty other early warning systems that

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[189] Ibid., p. 10.

[190] IHI Corporation. (2021). Contributing to Safe Evacuation Guidance through Early Detection of a CBRN Terrorism Threat: Visualizing a potential threat in a certain area with the CBRN Early-Warning System. IHI Engineering Review, 54(1). https://www.ihi.co.jp/en/technology/review_library/review_en/2020/_cms_conf01/__icsFiles/afieldfile/2021/04/09/Vol54No1_AA.pdf

[191] Ibid.

[192] Dilanian, K. (May, 2021). DHS launches warning system to find domestic terrorism threats on public social media. NBC News. https://www.nbcnews.com/politics/national-security/dhs-launches-warning-system-find-domestic-terrorism-threats-public-social-n1266707

[193] Ibid.

were used across the United States to counter terrorism/In fact, the United States has a significant experience in using early warning systems for counterterrorism. It is, for instance, the case of the *"Terrorism Early Warning Group (TEW)"* that was established in 1996 by the *"Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department (LASD)"* and aimed at reinforcing the county's terrorism prevention efforts by tracking, assessing and responding to emerging terrorism threats by way of a multidisciplinary entity for intelligence liaison and sharing.[194] The group had performed various intelligence-related tasks that majorly consist of "networked information sharing, intelligence fusion, response planning tools, and operational net assessment in the event of an imminent threat or terrorist attack."[195] The contributions of TEW were of great value in counterterrorism with a remarkable success throughout the United States as "other jurisdictions, such as Pierce County, Washington, and Tulsa, Oklahoma, have created their own TEWs based on the L.A. model to improve their intelligence sharing capabilities."[196] According to the *U.S. Department of Homeland Security*, TEW constituted a tremendous asset for local government in terms of prevention, preparedness and response measures against terrorism.[197]

Another example of the use of early warning systems for counterterrorism is EWAS, a proposed model that is designed to predict and detect terrorist threats. Although few or almost no data exist on the success of the model, it is worth providing an overview of its architecture. Indeed, EWAS is developed to generate early alerts to intelligence and law enforcement agencies in a bid to guard against the occurrence of any act of terrorism.[198] The system is relied on the collection and monitoring of a wide range of data pertaining to terrorists or terrorist groups and their affiliations which can be retrieved from various "sources like servers of any governmental or private organizations, web sites on internet, news items, RSS feed

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[194] See, Lesson Learned Information Sharing-LLIS. (n.d.). Los Angeles County, California's Terrorism Early Warning Group. *Homeland Security Digital Library*, p.1. https://www.hsdl.org/?view&did=777733; see also, Sullivan, J., Wirtz, J. J. (2008). Terrorism Early Warning and Co-Production of Counterterrorism Intelligence. International Journal of Intelligence and Counterintelligence, 21(1), pp. 13-25. DOI:10.1080/08850600701648686

[195] Ibid.

[196] Ibid., p. 4.

[197] U.S. Department of Homeland Security. (2005). Terrorism Early Warning Group: Intelligence Coordination Among Federal, State, and Local Agencies. *Homeland Security Digital Library*, p.4. https://www.hsdl.org/?view&did=469581

[198] Qureshi, P.A.R., Memon, N. & Wiil, U.K. (2010). EWAS: Modeling Application for Early Detection of Terrorist Threats. In: Memon N., Alhajj R. (eds). From Sociology to Computing in Social Networks. Springer, p. 141. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-7091-0294-7_8

files, manually drafted files, or may be in the mind of some investigators working in the field." [199] As the collected data alone don't suffice to generate warn-able situations and thus need to undergo some other steps, the system is made up of three major parts which respectively turn the acquired data into workable datasets or structure, investigate in details the structured data to come up with some results, and finally filter the data from the first part and integrate them to the second one. [200]

Moreover, and as far as the West Africa region is concerned, the *West Africa Network for Peacebuilding (WANEP)*, an active civil society organization within ECOWAS member states has designed a series of early warning indicators for the purpose of monitoring trends that are likely to spark religious fundamentalism and violent extremism in the region. These indicators include but are not limited to the reporting on "complaints/protest by groups over marginalization or exclusion; unusual movement of people out/into a community; discovery of small arms, light weapons and I.E.D materials; sudden increase of inciteful and radical preaching; increase of human right abuses and extra-judicial killings by state agents and non-state actors; uncensored use of social media/ICT to propagate extreme ideologies; increase/presence of isolated/suspicious groups; increase number of thugs, militias, vigilante, private security groups." [201] WANEP through the development of these indicators, has proved not just the importance of early warning systems in counterterrorism field, but also the increasing need to restructure ECOWARN in a manner that it is capable of assessing terrorism risks and threats in West Africa.

All the same, it is worth noting that other counterterrorism-related early warning systems might exist that this study has not researched. But with their considerable experience in conflicts prevention field over the past decades, early warning systems have the potential to add value to the fight against terrorism.

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[199] Ibid.

[200] Ibid., p. 142.

[201] WANEP. (October, 2014). Stakeholders Meeting to develop Early Warning Indicators on Violent Extremism in West Africa: Summary of Proceedings. http://www.wanep.org/wanep/files/resources/rp_stakeholders_meeting_ew_violent_extremism.pdf

3.2.3. Lack of Terrorism Risk and Threat Assessment: A Weak Point to ECOWAS' counterterrorism Ability

In its efforts to curb terrorism within West Africa, ECOWAS has so far developed various measures including collaborations with several state and non-state actors at regional and international level. But one of its most important instruments, in this regard, is known as ECOWAS Counterterrorism Strategy (ECTS). The ECTS was inspired by the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy as it relies on three grand pillars such as "*prevent*, *pursue*, and *reconstruct*", and purposely preconditions the human security, wellbeing and economic development of West African citizens to its effective prevention and eradication of terrorism in West Africa.[202] The three pillars are embedded in the logic that in case the prevention of terrorism fails, Member States should at any price pursue and prosecute the perpetrators of terrorist incidents, as well as the reparation of any harms such incidents might inflict on people or the society. The first pillar makes it an obligation for the Member States to carry out a set of activities for the prevention of terrorism occurrence such as keeping track of certain cultural, socio-economic or political trends in a bid to eliminate some conditions conducive to the rise of terrorism. The pillar also includes the promotion of democracy, enhancement of human rights protection through effective ratification and enforcement of legal regimes, prevention of violent extremism and radicalization, improvement of intelligence, etc.[203] The second pillar while focusing on the criminal justice capacity able to bring terrorists to justice, offers rapid military and non-military approaches to the Member States' responses to terrorism when or before it occurs. As such, it is expected that this pillar enable the Member States' capabilities in terms of the investigation, interception and disruption of terrorists' affiliations, plots, recruitment and training capacity, finances and fund-raising ability, acquisition of weapons and other equipment.[204] The third pillar aims to protect the rights of victims to the reparation of any damage caused by

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[202] See, ECOWAS. (2019). ECOWAS Counter-Terrorism Strategy: Implementation Plan. https://www.ecowas.int/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/IMPLEMENTATION-PLAN-CT.pdf; ECOWAS. (February, 2013). ECOWAS Political Declaration and Common Position against Terrorism. https://edup.ecowas.int/allevents/categories/key-resources/ecowas-counter-terrorism-strategy/; See also, United Nations. (2006). UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy. https://www.un.org/counterterrorism/un-global-counter-terrorism-strategy

[203] ECOWAS. (2019). ECOWAS Counter-Terrorism Strategy: Implementation Plan. https://www.ecowas.int/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/IMPLEMENTATION-PLAN-CT.pdf

[204] Ibid.

terrorist acts including the re-construction of the society and boosting of the public's trust and confidence in state institutions to effectively counter terrorism threats. The strategy has also set up other mechanisms such as the "ECOWAS Counter-Terrorism Coordination Bureau (ECOCTB)", "ECOWAS Arrest Warrant (ECOWARRANT)", "ECOWAS Black List of Terrorist and Criminal Networks (ECOLIST)", "ECOWAS Counter-Terrorism Training Centre" and the "Counter-Terrorism Technical Assistance Directory."[205] Although this strategy constitutes an ambitious counterterrorism framework, it has been encountering several challenges when it comes to its strict compliance and effective implementation by the Member States as a result of their lack of political will and financial commitment.[206]

It can thus be posited that the strategy was never implemented or is yet to be so comprehensively and effectively.[207] ECOWAS seemed to have even lost some of its leadership in the regional battle against terrorism threats as it has been encountering a sort of rivalry in its interactions with external actors such as United Nations, African Union or G5 Sahel, thus undermining its regional initiatives when it comes especially to military interventions.[208] Indeed, any action from regional or sub-regional entities involving the use of force is subjected to the approval of the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) in line with the Chapter 8, art. 53 of the UN Charter which states that "[…]no enforcement action shall be taken under regional arrangements or by regional agencies without the authorization of the Security Council […]."[209] Likewise, African Union makes it an obligation for sub-regional organizations in the field of security to keep its "[..]Peace and Security Council fully and continuously informed of their activities and ensure that these activities are closely harmonized and coordinated with the activities of the Peace and Security Council" according to the article 16/3 of the "Protocol Relating to the Establishment

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[205] ECOWAS. (February, 2013). ECOWAS Political Declaration and Common Position against Terrorism. https://edup.ecowas.int/allevents/categories/key-resources/ecowas-counter-terrorism-strategy/
[206] See, Akanji, O. O. (2019). Sub-regional Security Challenge: ECOWAS and the War on Terrorism in West Africa. Insight on Africa (SAGEPUB), 11(1), p. 105. DOI: 10.1177/0975087818805842.
[207] See, Arhinful, G. A. (2019). *Geopolitics and (Non-)Implementation of the 2013 ECOWAS Counter Terrorism Strategy*. GRIN Verlag.
[208] Théroux-Bénoni, L-A. (September, 2019). West Africa doesn't need another counter-terrorism force. *Institute for Security Studies*. https://issafrica.org/iss-today/west-africa-doesnt-need-another-counter-terrorism-force
[209] United Nations. (n.d.). United Nations Charter, Chapter VIII: Regional Arrangements. https://www.un.org/en/about-us/un-charter/chapter-8

of the Peace and Security Council of the African Union."[210] These provisions constitute serious legitimacy issues for ECOWAS and somehow undermine its counterterrorism initiatives as it was the case in its response to terrorism threats and criminality in Mali through a Standby Force Mission known as MICEMA whose consideration was delayed by African Union, and later replaced by the "African-led International Support Mission to Mali (AFISMA)", a joint ECOWAS/African Union-backed continental initiative.[211] Despite being approved by the UNSC Resolution 2085 but without any funding plans, AFISMA was also replaced later by the "United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA)" with the UNSC Resolution 2100.[212]

As if it was not enough, other sub-regional initiatives involving ECOWAS Member States have also emerged and challenged the ECOWAS' leadership in regional counterterrorism. To mention but a few, there are "*Multinational Joint Task Force (MNJTF)*" against Boko Haram created by three ECOWAS countries (Nigeria, Niger, Benin) and two other countries (Chad, Cameroon); the *G5 Sahel* comprising Burkina Faso, Mali, Niger, Chad and Mauritania; the *Accra Initiative,* an ad hoc security arrangement created by Burkina Faso, Benin, Ghana, Côte d'Ivoire, and Togo, with Niger and Mali as observer countries.[213] As such, ECOWAS is marginalized by its own member countries as they shift from the effective implementation of its existing counterterrorism measures and embrace other sub-regional counterterrorism coalitions. This can suggest that the Member States are losing confidence in the ECOWAS Counterterrorism Strategy's ability to combat terrorism in West Africa. The organization has seemed to acknowledge these challenges during its 58th Ordinary Session that took place on 23 January 2021 as the Heads of State and Government have decried "the continued terrorist attacks in

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[210] African Union. (n.d.). Protocol Relating to the Establishment of the Peace and Security Council of the African Union. https://www.peaceau.org/uploads/psc-protocol-en.pdf

[211] Akanji, O. O. (2019). Sub-regional Security Challenge: ECOWAS and the War on Terrorism in West Africa. Insight on Africa (SAGEPUB), 11(1), p. 105. DOI: 10.1177/0975087818805842.

[212] United Nations Peacekeeping. (n.d.). United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali. https://minusma.unmissions.org/en; Théroux-Bénoni, L-A. (2014). The long path to MINUSMA: assessing the international response to the crisis in Mali. In Peacekeeping in Africa. *Routledge.* https://www.taylorfrancis.com/chapters/edit/10.4324/9781315850764-21/long-path-minusma-assessing-international-response-crisis-mali-lori-anne-th%C3%A9roux-b%C3%A9noni

[213] Théroux-Bénoni, L-A. (September, 2019). West Africa doesn't need another counter-terrorism force. Institute for Security Studies. https://issafrica.org/iss-today/west-africa-doesnt-need-another-counter-terrorism-force

frontline countries[…]despite the intense efforts deployed by these countries."[214] Prior to this session, and making sense of the challenges encountered by its counterterrorism strategy, ECOWAS leaders have held an extraordinary Summit on Terrorism on 14 September 2019 in Ouagadougou (Burkina-Faso) for the purpose of reviewing ECOWAS' existing counterterrorism measures and coming up with an emergency 2020-2024 action plan with a total cost of US$2.3 billion for the eradication of terrorism in West Africa.[215] Although the plan "enables ECOWAS to provide leadership on an issue that it has been competing with for years against the United Nations, African Union and Group of Five Sahel (G5 Sahel)", it has so far showed no promising progress as more than one year after its adoption, necessary funds for the financing of the plan are yet to be provided by the Member States.[216]

However, it can be postulated that a terrorism risk and threat assessment approach backed with early warning data might have prevented ECOWAS Counterterrorism Strategy from these implementation challenges. In fact, in a 2019 report on the assessment of ECOWARN system, the ECOWAS Commission and its scientific security experts have acknowledged these challenges and, in this regard, raised the need of ECOWARN to strengthen the community's ability to effectively and efficiently prevent terrorism.[217]

This analysis of ECOWAS and its scientific community is obvious as the organization lacks an active role from ECOWARN within the operationalization of the three pillars of its Counterterrorism Strategy, even if it is expected in the implementation plan of the strategy that ECOWARN expand its mandate in order to

[214] ECOWAS. (January, 2021). Final Communique of the 58th Ordinary Session of the ECOWAS Authority of Heads of State and Government. https://www.ecowas.int/final-communique-of-the-58th-ordinary-session-of-the-ecowas-authority-of-heads-of-state-and-government/
[215] ECOWAS. (December, 2019). Final Communiqué–Fifty-Sixth Ordinary Session of the ECOWAS Heads of State and Government. https://www.ecowas.int/final-communique-ifty-sixth-ordinary-session-of-the-ecowas-heads-of-state-and-government/; ECOWAS. (September, 2019). Final Communique of ECOWAS Summit on Terrorism- Ouagadougou 14, september 2019. https://www.ecowas.int/final-communique-of-ecowas-summit-on-terrorism-ouagadougou-14-september-2019/; ECOWAS. (December, 2019). Governmental Experts Meet on Action Plan to Curb Terrorism in the ECOWAS Region. https://www.ecowas.int/governmental-experts-meet-on-action-plan-to-curb-terrorism-in-the-ecowas-region/
[216] Kwarkye, S. (February, 2021). Slow progress for West Africa's latest counter-terrorism plan. https://issafrica.org/iss-today/slow-progress-for-west-africas-latest-counter-terrorism-plan
[217] ECOWAS. (2019, October). ECOWAS and Scientific Community Assess ECOWARN System. https://www.ecowas.int/ecowas-and-scientific-community-assess-ecowarn-system/.

include terrorism indicators.[218] That is, identifying only terrorism indicators does not suffice to effectively combat terrorism as there still exists a known challenge which is the gap between the warning and the response capability. Thus, ECOWAS lacks action to address conflict risks that it is warned on, let alone to use the early warning data to combat terrorism.[219] Clearly, there is no approach for terrorism risk and threat assessment in ECOWAS' counterterrorism strategy. Likewise, such approach doesn't exist in the ECOWARN's mandates either.[220] With regard to the benefits of the TRAM methodology as a result of its application to the threats posed by Boko Haram in Nigeria and JNIM in Mali, and the insights of early warning systems in counterterrorism, the unavailability of a terrorism risk and threat assessment approach within ECOWARN can be regarded as a weak point to the ECOWAS' counterterrorism ability. The lack of such approach reveals *inter alia* the grand uncertainty around terrorism risks and threats in West Africa and bears out the inability of ECOWAS to assess not just the occurrence likelihood of terrorist activities and their potential outcomes, but also the intent as well as the capabilities of terrorist groups. In absence of this assessment, any efforts against terrorism might not be effective. This gap means a lot for the current state and the future of counterterrorism within ECOWAS region. As terrorist groups continue to gain momentum with their episodes of attacks in West Africa, ECOWAS' counterterrorism strategy without a sound reform for terrorism risk and threat assessment is helpless and runs the risk of being totally obsolete in the future vis-à-vis the rise of terrorist activities while giving rise to the Member States' tacit lack of confidence in the strategy as an effective regional counterterrorism instrument.

To address this concern, there is a need to reorient ECOWAS Early Warning and Response Network in a manner that the assessment of terrorism risk and threat be rooted in its mandates and the use of predictive indicators help foil terrorist

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[218] ECOWAS. (2019). ECOWAS Counter-Terrorism Strategy: Implementation Plan. https://www.ecowas.int/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/IMPLEMENTATION-PLAN-CT.pdf

[219] Cousins, N. (May, 2019). Use of Early Warning Systems in Western Africa to Combat Terrorism. *Harvard Extension School-Capstone Project*, p. 3. https://capstone.extension.harvard.edu/files/capstone/files/use_of_early_warning_systems_spring_2018_redacted.pdf

[220] Cousins, N. (May, 2019). Use of Early Warning Systems in Western Africa to Combat Terrorism. *Harvard Extension School-Capstone Project*, p. 3. https://capstone.extension.harvard.edu/files/capstone/files/use_of_early_warning_systems_spring_2018_redacted.pdf

attacks by pinpointing the locations where the occurrence of terrorist incidents is highly probable and certain.

3.3. RETHINKING ECOWARN REGARDING TERRORISM RISK AND THREAT ASSESSMENT

As far as the reorientation of ECOWARN is concerned, an expansion of its thematic indicators to some core risk factors is required and deemed crucial to effectively make the assessment of terrorism risk and its threat prediction a reality within ECOWAS region. These factors–that can be made up of the risk of individuals seeking to join a terrorist group or become lone-wolves [1], the risk of a given group or organization engaging in violent extremism [2], and the risk of an individual or a group posing some types of violence including bombings, WMDs, suicide attacks, etc [3]–have the potential to help ECOWAS guard against terrorist acts within its member states.[221]

Firstly, the risk of an individual seeking to join a terrorist group or become a lone terrorist is clearly identified in Moghaddam's 'staircase to terrorism' which, as it was previously emphasized, describes the various levels through which individuals involve, engage, and evolve into terrorist organizations. This factor, if included into ECOWARN's thematic indicators list, can help keep track of individuals' social behaviors, and stop them before they become terrorists or cause harm to the mainstream society. Both involvement and commitment of a given individual in a terrorist group or terrorist activities can be predicted starting from his/her frustration, grievances, and aggressive behaviors to his/her endorsement of terrorism and categorical thinking. Secondly, the risk of a given group or organization engaging in violent extremism is also an indicator that needs to be subject to monitoring at ECOWARN's zonal centers. In this regard, a given organization involved in some activities such as uncontrollable fundraising, acquirement of weapons, suspicious identification and recruitment of people, discreet paramilitary training of civilians, and unusual surveillance of critical sites or locations are *inter alia* warning signs that need to be monitored. These signs can help figure out whether an organization is getting engaged in terrorism or not.

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[221] See, Roberts, K., Horgan, J. (2008). Risk Assessment and the Terrorist. *Perspectives On Terrorism*, 2(6). http://www.terrorismanalysts.com/pt/index.php/pot/article/view/38/html

With regard to the third factor which is the risk of an individual or a group posing some types of violence, it should be noted that despite the enormous consequences that terrorist violence might potentially bring, it may be regarded in a relative manner as a rare event due to its low base rate.[222] While this low base rate might give rise to some accurate prediction or reflection that a specific terrorist act is unlikely to occur, one must not lose sight on the fact that this reflection is of little use if not unuseful as far as one is committed to managing and making sense of the terrorism risk that there might be within a time frame. That is, when assessing terrorism risk, one should not consider the likelihood of terrorist events as being always unpredictable or uncertain for the only reason that they generally have a low frequency. Doing so would obviously jeopardize the process as in the case of bombings for example, a terrorist attack would only be delivered successfully if it was prepared throughout a long period of time and has been preceded by a series of related activities such as seeking how to acquire bombs on black markets or dark web marketplaces, searching on internet or deep web how to make an artisanal bomb, etc. [223] The consideration of this factor as a thematic indicator will help ECOWARN's analysts follow up and foil such activities which can constitute early warning signs of a future terrorist attack. The monitoring of this thematic indicator will also have the potential to not only help the analysts understand and address the factors that decrease or increase the likelihood of terrorist events, but also enable law enforcement to take more adequate and effective actions.

In addition to the terrorism risk assessment and its threat prediction, ECOWARN can also be reoriented in terms of the risk mitigation. In a bid to then mitigate other factors that may increase the risk of terrorist incidents, ECOWAS decision makers might consider expanding ECOWARN's mandate to facilitate capacity building for the implementation of both preventive and offensive or defensive counterterrorism measures. The preventive measures can help reduce the risk and may include efforts such as motivating the whole West African populations

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[222] Roberts, K., Horgan, J. (2008). Risk Assessment and the Terrorist. *Perspectives On Terrorism*, 2(6). http://www.terrorismanalysts.com/pt/index.php/pot/article/view/38/html

[223] ''Black market'' is a clandestine market where prohibited goods or services are sold and bought. These goods or services can include drug trade, human trafficking, arms, and weapons smuggling, etc. The ''Deep Web'' can be defined as a web content that is open but not indexed or discoverable in common search engines such as Google, Bing, Yahoo, etc. Most of deep web's content includes banking pages, private information, forums, paste sites, etc. As far as the ''Dark Web'' is concerned, it is part of deep web and only accessible using a browser called Tor which helps anonymize users. The dark web is mostly made up of marketplaces, forums, news commentary, etc.

to always report unusual or suspicious activities in their neighborhood, encouraging them not to join terrorist organizations by multiplying rewards for people that firmly stand against involvement in terror groups, etc. Offensive and/or defensive measures can seek to disrupt ability of terrorist organizations to recruit new terrorists, empower security forces to infiltrate terror groups, disrupt the groups' acquirement of weapons, capture their members, etc. In order to be effectively involved in these measures, ECOWARN will need to rely not only on open-source data but essentially on real-time human and signal intelligence data, which might be very challenging as far as the sharing of intelligence between the member states is concerned.[224]

3.4. INTELLIGENCE SHARING AS A SUPPLEMENT TO ECOWARN: CHALLENGES AND PERSPECTIVES

Intelligence plays an essential role within the risk and threat assessment process. Intelligence is of a great value in the fight against terrorism as it helps disrupt and foil terrorist groups' plans of attacks. For instance, Boko Haram like any other terrorist group is commonly known for its covert mode of operation and cannot be defeated without a tactical, well-informed and strategic intelligence backed with secret operations. [225] Intelligence activities help acquire reliable information regarding the *''who''*, *''what''*, *''where''*, *''when''*, and *''how''* of terrorist organizations. In the absence of intelligence activities, the risk and threat assessment of terrorism may be unreliable and unpredictable. That is why as a rule of thumbs, the assessment must follow a rigorous and comprehensive collection and analysis of necessary data across ECOWAS region. This is to say the assessment is well informed and includes, in this regard, the knowledge and understanding of all type of organizations operating within the territories of the member states for the purpose of being able to take actions in case of potential risk or threat of terrorism. The use of intelligence has also the potential to help ECOWARN establish the relationships that might exist between these organizations and some individuals for the purpose of

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[224] Human intelligence also known as HUMINT is an intelligence collection discipline that is made up of espionage through which secret information is collected thanks to human means or spies. Signals intelligence or SIGINT is also an intelligence collection discipline that uses technologies to intercept any communication whether national or international as well as to prevent a state or government's communications from being intercepted by foreign governments or other actors.
See, Lowenthal, M. M. (2009). Intelligence: from secret to policy (4th ed.). Washington D.C.: *CQ Press*, pp. 87-89.
[225] Ofongo, O. A. (2018). Defense Strategy: Intelligence and Management of Boko Haram Terrorism in Nigeria. *University of Manitoba*.

easily coming up with a concrete evidence-based classification of both entities as "*Terrorist Organizations*" and "*Terrorists*" respectively. Moreover, the changing nature of the entities' profile in terms of terrorism risk and threat can be easily monitored thanks to the intelligence activities.

Despite the valuable contribution that state-based intelligence is able to bring to ECOWARN in terms of terrorism risk and threat assessment, concerns still need to be raised regarding the effectiveness of intelligence sharing between the member states and ECOWARN's monitoring centers. To begin with, ECOWARN has long been accustomed to the use of open source data for its analysis in respect of the member states' sovereignty. Another reason is the probable existence of a lack of trust among the member states for intelligence sharing purpose as they might consider–in case of intelligence leak–running the risk of jeopardizing their national defense and security arsenal by handing over on a silver platter their classified information to their potential or current enemies. With the possibility of exploiting intelligence communities for personal or group interests–such as efforts to eliminate opponents from a political competition through abuses of human rights, false allegations of corruption, illegal detention or torture–it's no secret that certain member states might refrain from sharing necessary intelligence with ECOWARN. Intelligence sharing with ECOWARN is likely to be undermined in countries that lack clear legislation or policy guidelines detailing the intelligence communities' role and functions, and how their intrusive tactics of investigation, arrest and detention are subjected to a democratic system of control. That is, the success of intelligence sharing between the member states and ECOWARN requires significant democratic control of intelligence agencies in the manner that the relationship between the state, intelligence communities and politics is limited and more independent. But in the presence of a sound democratic governance of intelligence communities, how can the member states be assured that their intelligence sharing with ECOWARN is free of potential jeopardy while being confident about its usefulness for counterterrorism?

To address this dilemma and foster intelligence sharing, collaboration between ECOWARN's zonal analysts and the intelligence agencies of the member states will be necessary. This collaboration can help design a highly classified Terrorism Risk and Threat Index (*TRITIX*) exclusively made up of finished intelligence resulting from the data shared by the intelligence agencies of the member states. That is, the

shared data to be considered as finished intelligence will need to undergo thorough analysis by ECOWARN analysts. The analysis process is likely to make the raw intelligence (shared data) look different from the finished intelligence and somehow avoid intelligence leak. As such, early warning data generated from *TRITIX* can be disseminated secretly and exclusively to the intelligence agencies of the member states that are only concerned with a given terrorism risk or threat. The early warning data once disseminated can help ECOWARN and the concerned intelligence agencies and/or member states articulate quick and adequate response to any perceived terrorism risk and threat.[226]

3.5. Conclusion

This chapter includes three sections. The first section has offered an overview of the modus operandi of the ECOWAS Early Warning System and found out that the system is more focused on conflict prevention to the detriment of terrorism risk and threat assessment. This lack of terrorism risk and threat has been demonstrated as a weakness to ECOWAS' ability to effectively guard against terrorism in West Africa in line with the challenges encountered by its counterterrorism strategy that is yet to be fully implemented, and the tremendous insights as well as benefits that early warning systems provide in counterterrorism field. That is why the following section has served the purpose of putting forward a reorientation of ECOWARN in a bid to facilitate the assessment and mitigation of terrorism risk and threat by way of an inclusion of some core terrorism risk factors to the system's thematic indicators. The third section has elucidated how critical the intelligence activities are to an effective operationalization of this reorientation and later discussed the challenges of intelligence sharing between ECOWARN and the member states, as the former unlike state-based intelligence, has long been accustomed to the use of open-source data in respect of the latter's sovereignty. The section also addressed these challenges through some perspectives that can eliminate the risk of intelligence leak, and foster trust and confidence among the member states in terms of intelligence sharing with ECOWARN.

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[226] See, Cousins, N. (May, 2019). Use of Early Warning Systems in Western Africa to Combat Terrorism. *Harvard Extension School-Capstone Project*, pp. 6-8. https://capstone.extension.harvard.edu/files/capstone/files/use_of_early_warning_systems_spring_201 8_redacted.pdf; Johnson, R. (2013). Antiterrorism and Threat Response: Planning and Implementation. Boca Raton, FL: *CRC Press*, p. 131. https://doi.org/10.1201/b13872

CONCLUSION

The main aim of this thesis is to analyze the ECOWAS Early Warning and Response Network in a bid to assess terrorism risk and threat within the community. The research took the form of a terrorism risk assessment by means of an exploration of the TRAM methodology, a tool designed by the *Science Applications International Corporation*, the *United States Department of Homeland Security* and the *National Preparedness Directorate* and which is aimed at implementing a well-structured analytical process related to terrorism risk analysis, establishing an approach for continuous risk tracking, and backing investment decision-making for a better return on investment. The logic behind the application of TRAM methodology is to interdict any terrorist attack whose outcomes might cause serious damage not only to a specific institution's assets and infrastructure but mostly to human security. In this regard, this study did not apply the TRAM methodology to a specific institution's asset or infrastructure, as in contrast to individuals, government officials and military personnel, terrorist groups are more unlikely to attack assets or infrastructures in West Africa. Instead, the study's application of TRAM methodology has focused on the threats directly posed to human security in Mali and Nigeria respectively by terrorist groups such as Jamaat Nusrat al-Islam wal-Muslimin and Boko Haram. Nonetheless, this study raised a research problem related to the non-existence of a comprehensive approach like that of the TRAM methodology within ECOWAS system for the assessment of terrorism risk and threat in West Africa. In a bid to address this problem, the study finds that:

-the emergence of the risk factors such as corruption, authoritarianism, imposition of religion in politics gives rise to terrorism in West Africa;

-ECOWARN's focus on inter-state conflict prevention over the prevention of terrorism risk and threat is a weak point to ECOWAS' ability to effectively guard against terrorism in West Africa in line with the challenges encountered by its counterterrorism strategy and the tremendous insights and benefits that early warning systems provide in counterterrorism field;

-there is an increasing need of an approach for the comprehensive assessment of terrorism risk and threat within ECOWAS region as a result of the assessment of the

terrorism risks and threats posed by Boko Haram in Nigeria and JNIM in Mali, and the provided reorientation of ECOWARN.

As such, the first chapter of this research sought to clarify essential concepts such as terrorism, risk, threat, risk and threat assessment, terrorism risk and threat, terrorism risk and threat assessment, and early warning. Further, the relative deprivation and threat perception theories were presented as the theoretical frameworks crucial to this study. Insights from the relative deprivation theory have helped emphasize how some risks contribute to the rise of terrorism while the threat perception theory has been a tremendous asset in understanding the intent and capabilities of some terrorist groups in West Africa. The chapter also provided an overview of the three major components of the TRAM methodology thus explored as the analytical groundwork of the research. The next chapter of the study has determined corruption, authoritarianism and imposition of religion in politics as some potential risk factors of terrorism within the ECOWAS region so as to come up with the point that these factors might give rise to serious grievances which terrorist groups are likely to take advantage of for the purpose of promoting their ideology and recruiting new members among the grieved or radicalized individuals. As such and by means of insights from the relative deprivation theory, it has been noted that there is a correlation between the emergence of these risk factors and the rise of terrorism risk in West Africa. For thoroughly making sense of this fact, the chapter also assessed terrorism risk and threat posed by Boko Haram in Nigeria and Jamaat Nusrat al-Islam wal-Muslimin in Mali. This assessment was based on the three major components of the TRAM methodology. As part of the assessment's first component, it has been found that both Boko Haram and JNIM are ideologically and vehemently hostile to western values and interests in West Africa to the extent that they are often subjected to deadly attacks by the groups. Further, the assessment has addressed the groups' capabilities such as their tactics of attack and mode of weapons acquisition as well as the vulnerability of Nigerian and Malian governments' counterterrorism measures. The assessment also emphasized the impact of Boko Haram and JNIM's threats on human security and the harm they directly cause to people's basic needs such as health, food and nutrition, education, and shelter. As a result of the second component, a description of the historical tracking of JNIM and Boko Haram's risk was provided so as to highlight the particular way both groups have evolved over

time and the changes that occur in the perception of their terrorism risk and threat profile. The third component is related to the risk mitigation and has cleared the path for an evaluation of some efforts made by Malian and Nigerian governments as well as their future projects to reduce terrorism risk and threat. Thus, the result of this evaluation has clearly raised the need of an approach for the comprehensive assessment of terrorism risk and threat within ECOWAS' member states.

The third chapter has addressed this concern through an analysis of the ECOWAS Early Warning and Response Network. The first part of the chapter has explained the modus operandi of the ECOWAS Early Warning System, and discovered that the system is more focused on conflict prevention than terrorism risk and threat assessment–which has been evidenced as a gap to ECOWAS' ability to effectively prevent terrorism in West Africa due to the challenges encountered by its counterterrorism strategy and the tremendous insights and benefits that early warning systems provide in counterterrorism field. To address this gap, the second part has put forward a reorientation of ECOWARN in a bid to facilitate the assessment and mitigation of terrorism risk and threat by way of an inclusion of some core terrorism risk factors to the system's thematic indicators. The last part of the chapter has demonstrated how the intelligence activities are crucial to an effective operationalization of this reorientation and further discussed the challenges of intelligence sharing between ECOWARN and the member states, as the former unlike state-based intelligence, has long been accustomed to the use of open-source data in respect of the latter's sovereignty. Moreover, these challenges were addressed through some perspectives that can eliminate the risk of intelligence leak, and foster trust and confidence among the member states as far as their intelligence sharing with ECOWARN is concerned.

That is, this research has made valuable contributions as it offers theoretical and practical insights for the fight against terrorism in West Africa. And by evidencing the benefits of early warning systems in counterterrorism, the research also paves the way for more literature development on the field.

As part of the research methodology, the findings of this study were made possible through the exploration of a qualitative approach. That is, only secondary data have been used to achieve the aims assigned to the research. The collected data

are made up of highlights, incident reports, policy briefs and other data from ECOWAS Commission. The data also include academic books, papers published in academic journals, newspaper articles, etc. The research was typically descriptive and analytical because of the impossibility to collect primary data due to the constraints related to the COVID-19 pandemic. The lack of primary data constitutes *inter alia* a limitation to this study as the assessment of the asset and infrastructure of some West Africa-based organizations was not taken into consideration within the application of TRAM methodology. As a recommendation, future research might consider further researching this element, especially, the assessment of the threats that terrorism poses to foreign companies in West Africa.

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