

Ghana National Peace Council's Performance During the 2016 Election Cycle

June 2017



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EVALUATION OF THE

Ghana National Peace Council's Performance During the 2016 Election Cycle

June 2017



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Contents

Acronyms	v
1. Executive Summary	7
2. Introduction	9
3. Background and Context	10
4. Purpose and Scope of the Evaluation	13
5. Evaluation Methodology	14
5.1 Evaluation approach	14
5.2 Evaluation method	14
5.3 Data collection and analysis	14
5.4 Sampling framework	15
5.5 Limitations	15
6. Evaluation Findings	16
6.1 The NPC's design	16
6.2 Planning	20
6.3 Implementation of activities	20
6.4 SWOT analysis	25
7. Conclusions	26
8. Recommendations	27
8.1 The NPC's design	27
8.2 Implementation	27
8.3 Outputs and outcomes	28
8.4 Sustainability	28
9. Bibliography	29
Annex 1. Methodology	30
Annex 2. Evaluation Framework	31
Annex 3. Evaluation Standards	33
Annex 4. Work Plan	34
Annex 5. List of Respondents	35

Acronyms

CHRAJ	Commission on Human Rights and Administrative Justice
CPP	Convention People's Party
CSO	civil society organisation
DPC	District Peace Council
EC	Electoral Commission
EMB	election management body
EWSs	early warning systems
KA IPTC	Kofi Annan International Peacekeeping Training Centre
MPs	Members of Parliament
NCCE	National Commission for Civic Education
NDC	National Democratic Congress
NEEWARG	National Elections Early Warning and Response Group
NMC	National Media Commission
NPC	National Peace Council
NPP	New Patriotic Party
REEWARG	Regional Elections Early Warning and Response Group
RPC	Regional Peace Council
SWOT	strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
WANEP	West Africa Network for Peacebuilding

1. Executive Summary

The National Peace Council (NPC) is a statutory body established through an Act of Parliament, the National Peace Council Act (No. 818 of 2011), to spearhead the Ghana peace architecture. Pursuant to its mandate, the NPC carried out a number of activities during the 2016 electoral process meant to ensure that elections were held within a peaceful environment. This report sets out the findings of the performance evaluation of the NPC carried out in Ghana from 5 to 16 June 2017. The evaluation findings are meant to inform the NPC's future interventions, especially in relation to elections in Ghana.

The evaluation assessed whether or not the NPC's 2016 activities in the pre-election, election and post-election phases were implemented effectively, the extent to which the NPC reached its targets, the challenges it encountered while executing its operational plan, and the role of each of the key stakeholders in the prevention, management and resolution of election-related violence in Ghana. In doing this, the evaluation used a qualitative methodology involving a literature review of the legal framework, key NPC documents and other relevant documents. Key informant interviews were conducted in Accra, Tamale, Kumasi and Takoradi. A total of 97 people were interviewed either individually or in a workshop setting. These were drawn from the NPC Secretariat, the Ministry of the Interior, religious and traditional bodies, political parties, civil society organisations and state agencies.

The overall findings of the evaluation point to a strong affirmation of the national peace architecture and the role of the NPC. However, a review of the pertinent documents and information obtained from the interviewed stakeholders revealed a number of weaknesses in design and programming that impacted on the optimal performance of the NPC during the 2016 elections and may potentially have a similar effect in future. Firstly, these weaknesses related to perceptions about the NPC's credibility, based on its design; it is regarded as being prone to executive interference. Some respondents pointed out that, for it to be credible, it should report directly to parliament instead of through the Ministry of the Interior. They

pointed out that, in the event of the NPC having to deal with an issue concerning the political party to which the Minister for the Interior belongs, there could be a conflict of interest on the part of the Minister. The evaluation found that, while concerns around the NPC's accountability are legitimate, some actors question its impartiality based on their own perceptions rather than on reality. Secondly, in spite of the huge responsibility placed on it, the NPC has to compete with other state agencies, such as the Ghana Police, for budget allocations. The current poor state of its finances is a direct consequence of the financial resources prioritisation and distribution by the Ministry of the Interior. Thirdly and finally, the NPC Board lacks inclusivity because its membership is mainly drawn from traditional and religious institutions, which are predominantly male. Therefore, the parts of society that are most affected by election-related violence, namely women, young people and people with disabilities, are not directly represented on the NPC Board.

Notwithstanding the above, the majority of stakeholders commended the efforts of the NPC, especially its regional structures, in maintaining peace during the 2016 elections. The NPC was particularly praised by respondents for the outreach programme that targeted conflict hotspots in all the ten regions of Ghana. It was reported to have conducted peace education in communities through public gatherings and media platforms. The NPC was also highly praised for its recognition of other peace actors, including traditional and religious bodies, political parties and civil society organisations. State agencies such as the National Commission for Civic Education (NCCE) and the Electoral Commission were also invited to deliver messages during the NPC programmes. It conducted training workshops for these actors and collaborated with them during the peace education roll-out. This inculcated them with a sense of responsibility and validated their role in peace efforts.

The evaluation established, however, that the NPC is struggling to co-ordinate the activities of the other peace actors, either because of their mandates, which are not necessarily focused on

peace, or because of a lack of financial resources. This is partly because the NPC is in dire need of financial support, without which it has not been able to carry out its mandate effectively. All respondents indicated that, despite having been established by parliament, the NPC and its regional structures do not get adequate government support. The members of the board and of the Regional Peace Councils were not always reimbursed for the costs they incurred when they performed their duties. Therefore, lack of the financial and human resources and the requisite infrastructure capacity have been a major handicap for the co-ordination of external actors and the management of the NPC Secretariat and the Regional Peace Councils' activities.

The activities of the peace councils at the national and regional levels have been entirely covered by development partners. This support had a huge impact during the 2016 elections, when the NPC was able, jointly with other peace actors, to establish early warning systems (EWSs) in the form of the National Elections Early Warning and Response Group, the Regional Elections Early Warning and Response Group and the situation rooms. Through these mechanisms, the NPC and its partners were able to receive real-time information identifying potential triggers of conflict. Reported cases were analysed and promptly addressed directly or in partnership with other state institutions such as the police. The NPC was commended by all actors who participated in the EWSs mechanisms for successfully hosting and effectively co-ordinating their operations.

The evaluation concluded that the NPC had successes in the conduct of election-related in 2016 activities, hence its affirmation by various stakeholders. In view of the highlighted shortcomings, the evaluation further concluded that there is an urgent need for these to be addressed before the 2020 electoral cycle activities gather pace. It is further concluded that the gains made during the 2016 elections provide a good benchmark for interventions in future elections. It is therefore recommended that, in order to improve the performance of the NPC, the design weaknesses have to be addressed in the long, medium and short term. The NPC needs to attend to the human resource gaps in order to be more effective. It was clear from the assessment that the NPC has not been able to achieve its goals in some areas contained in the Strategic Plan 2013–17 for a

number of reasons. Given that this strategic plan is coming to an end, the NPC needs to urgently review it and develop a new strategic plan as a road map for the next five years, 2017–22. The evaluation also recommends that, in order to deal with stakeholder expectations, the NPC has to systematically reach out to stakeholders to ensure an inclusive peace architecture where all stakeholders understand their roles. In order to achieve this, the NPC has to follow the strategic direction enshrined in the Strategic Plan 2013–17 to 'form a Peace Partnership for Ghana, which will involve ascension to a Memorandum of Understanding' intended to:

- recognise the NPC as the co-ordinating body for peace initiatives in Ghana;
- agree to a harmonised, co-ordinated and collaborative operational structure and processes for peace initiatives in Ghana;
- agree to joint programming.

The NPC also has to improve on its outreach processes for maximum coverage of conflict-prone regions and areas. Many of the NPC's interventions require time, and this means that its activities will have to start early and be in line with the election cycle.

2. Introduction

The National Peace Council (NPC) requested assistance from the Commonwealth Secretariat in evaluating its performance during the 2016 election cycle. The Commonwealth considers peace-building an important aspect in the promotion of democracy and good governance. This is demonstrated by the adoption of this year's Commonwealth theme, 'A Peace-building Commonwealth'. Guided by this conviction and its strategic integrated approach of combining conflict prevention with election observation and taking a holistic and long-term electoral cycle view of election observation, the Commonwealth Secretariat responded to the NPC's request by commissioning a consultant to conduct an evaluation in Ghana.

The consultant was tasked with assessing the NPC's pre-election, election and post-election activities for the electoral cycle of 2012–16. This report therefore assesses whether or not the NPC's activities were implemented effectively and in line with its strategic objectives; the extent to which it reached its targets; and whether or not it reached the intended beneficiaries in terms of its outreach programmes. The report also reviews the challenges encountered by the NPC while executing the tasks in its 2012–16 operational plan. Based on the findings, the report makes recommendations on institutional and operational issues, which the NPC can use to inform future programming and decisions about the next national elections in 2020.

3. Background and Context

Ghana is largely seen as an oasis of peace in a conflict-prone West African region. However, literature on Ghana's conflicts shows a trend of recurrent and often violent ethnic, religious, chieftaincy and land conflicts between and within communities, largely due to socio-economic, political and historical factors (Sulemana 2009; UNDP 2012; Kotia and Aubyn 2013; NPC 2013). Although a discussion of each of these factors is beyond the scope of this evaluation, a brief outline of the political context is provided because of its immediate relevance to the evaluation. A decade after attaining independence in 1957, Ghana experienced a series of internal political and governance challenges that threatened its embryonic independence. For instance, the 1964 amendment of its constitution effectively abolished multi-party politics and made the country a *de jure* one party state. This saw fundamental rights and freedoms, especially the right to form political parties and to contest political offices, severely curtailed.

Following growing upheaval, a first military coup, which overthrew the first president, Kwame Nkrumah, was staged in 1966. In 1969, Ghana adopted a new constitution that transferred political governance to the civilian government under the leadership of Kofi Busia. This development was, however, short-lived because there was another military coup in 1972 followed by two more in 1978 and 1981. Between 1981 and 1991, Ghana was led by Flight-Lieutenant Jerry John Rawlings, who had overthrown the elected government of Hilla Limann. The country returned to multi-party democracy in 1992 when it embraced political and democratic reforms. A constitutional referendum was conducted in 1992 and this led to the promulgation of a new constitution and the lifting of the ban on political parties. The new constitution also introduced the 'running mates' phenomenon in presidential elections, which, as Frempong (2008) rightly points out, 'added flavour of a different kind to the presidential races. Increasingly, people with vice presidential ambitions have openly campaigned and even paraded delegations to extol their virtues. Issues of regional, religious and gender balance have dominated the nomination processes but the final choices have often been full of surprises.'

Since 1992, the political party system in Ghana has assumed a two-party dimension, with political power alternating between the two main parties, namely the National Democratic Congress (NDC), which is a social democratic party, and the New Patriotic Party (NPP), which has a liberal democratic ideological orientation. Nevertheless, the country has, according to one of the stakeholders, always grappled with transitions between the parties. Since the return to multi-party politics,

Ghana did not have a clear transition mechanism. There were no standards and rules and therefore the transitions were not based on mutual trust until political parties negotiated a transition bill which outlined how the transition from one administration to the other was to be conducted. The bill was enacted into an Act of Parliament, the Presidential (Transition) Act, 2012 (Act 845), and has been a guiding instrument since 2009 (NDC interview, 12 June 2017).

Given the background of ethnic, religious and other community conflict typologies and, in particular, the foregoing political context, Ghana has established the NPC as a mechanism through which a tapestry of alternative dispute resolution peace-building initiatives can be pursued. The NPC is a statutory body established through the National Peace Council Act (Government of Ghana 2011) as the epitome of national efforts geared towards enhancing the capacity of the Ghana peace architecture. Article 3 of the National Peace Council Act No. 818 of 2011 outlines the following functions of the NPC:

- a. harmonise and co-ordinate conflict prevention, management and resolution and build sustainable peace through networking and co-ordination;
- b. strengthen capacities for conflict prevention, management and resolution and sustainable peace in the country including but not limited to chiefs, women, youth groups and community organisations;
- c. increase awareness of the use of non-violent strategies to prevent, manage and resolve conflict and build sustainable peace in the country;

- d. facilitate the amicable resolution of conflict through mediation and other processes including indigenous mechanisms for conflict resolution and peace-building;
 - e. promote understanding of the values of diversity, trust, tolerance, confidence building, negotiation, mediation, dialogue and reconciliation;
 - f. co-ordinate the work of Regional and District Peace Councils;
 - g. facilitate agreements and resolutions between parties in conflict;
 - h. make recommendations to the government and other stakeholders on actions to promote trust and confidence between and among groups;
 - i. perform any other function that is auxiliary to its object.
1. co-ordinate and harmonise all peace actors and initiatives within Ghana;
 2. promote understanding of peace for behavioural change;
 3. facilitate prevention and management of electoral violence;
 4. prevent tensions from erupting into conflict;
 5. manage conflicts so as to contain and limit further violent escalation;
 6. identify root causes and resolve conflict.

The NPC is composed of 13 eminent persons nominated by religious and traditional bodies and by the President. Members of the NPC serve for four years and are eligible for re-appointment. The National Peace Council Act also establishes subnational structures, namely Regional Peace Councils (RPCs) and District Peace Councils (DPCs), whose composition resembles that of the NPC in terms of the sectors from which members are drawn. The functions of the subnational structures are similar to those of the NPC, albeit with different geographic mandates. Guided by the Constitution of Ghana and the National Peace Council Act, the NPC, the RPCs and the DPCs interface with governmental and non-governmental institutions at the national, provincial and district levels.

In order to prioritise its activities and carry out its constitutional mandate effectively, the NPC developed a five-year strategic plan for 2013–17. Aligning itself with the aim, set out in the Ghana Shared Growth and Development Agenda 2010–13, of mitigating 'recurrent conflicts that continue to thwart national cohesion, economic growth, and undermine peace and stability', the NPC's Strategic Plan 2013–17 identifies the following six strategic objectives:

In fulfilment of its functions and pursuant to these strategic objectives, the NPC has, since 2013, been working with other agencies to ensure peace in Ghana. In terms of elections, the 2012 and 2016 elections were arguably the most challenging for the NPC, given the increased competition between the two main political actors. Fierce electoral competition had been mounting since the 2008 elections, especially in the presidential race between Nana Akufo-Addo of the NPP and John Atta Mills of the NDC. The contest was settled through a presidential run-off in which Atta Mills received 50.23 per cent of the votes compared with 49.77 per cent won by Akufo-Addo. In terms of the actual votes, this amounted to 4,521,032 and 4,480,446, respectively. According to Kotia and Aubyn (2013), the 2008 and 2012 elections were characterised by violence between the political parties, and this threatened the peace and stability of the country.

Ghana was confronted with a number of challenges ahead of the 2012 elections, which were a litmus test of its peace-building architecture. For the purposes of this evaluation, key among these were:

- a. the management of the transition in the presidency following the death of the incumbent president, John Atta Mills;
- b. the timing of the elections so soon after the death of the president. Against the background of the death of the head of state and succession politics within the ruling NDC, Ghana was on a knife edge for some days dealing with this tragedy; therefore, the question of the timing of the next election was raised by some.

Consequently, holding successful 2012 elections barely four months after the demise of the President meant that all electoral stakeholders and statutory bodies, including the NPC, had to work hard to ensure peaceful elections. There were similar pressures on these agencies during the 2016 electoral cycle, which witnessed an escalation in electoral competition. More demands were made by political parties and civil society for the election management body (EMB) and the NPC to intervene in election-related disputes. In this context, various election observation missions noted the peaceful way in which the 2016 elections were conducted. In particular, the Commonwealth Observer Group commended local peace efforts by the NPC and its partners that facilitated the signing of a peace pact by the presidential candidates ahead of the elections.

It was against this background and context that this evaluation of the NPC's performance during the 2016 election cycle was conducted.

4. Purpose and Scope of the Evaluation

The purpose of this evaluation was to review the effectiveness of the NPC in enhancing the capacity of Ghana's peace architecture before, during and after the general elections in 2016. Specifically, the evaluation was meant to assess:

- the effectiveness of the NPC in preventing election-related violence ahead of the 2016 elections;
- the performance of NPC and whether or not its activities were implemented effectively;
- the extent to which it reached its targets, as well as whether or not it reached the intended beneficiaries in terms of its interventions;
- the challenges encountered by the NPC while executing the tasks in its strategic and operational plans;
- the role of each of the key stakeholders in the prevention of election-related violence (political party leaders, community leaders, religious and traditional leaders, civil society, the media and the international community).

5. Evaluation Methodology

5.1 Evaluation approach

The approach to ascertaining the results of the NPC's interventions entailed an assessment of its 2016 electoral cycle strategy. Conceptually, this approach is presented in Figure 6.1 below.

5.2 Evaluation method

A qualitative methodology was used in this evaluation in order to understand the complex links between various aspects of Ghana's peace architecture, the electoral process and the roles of the various actors in terms of conflict prevention, management and resolution. Its efficacy is that it depends on salient meanings held by the participants in the situation. The data was obtained from stakeholder respondents who were drawn from selected institutions, and a summary of their responses was made identifying similar responses made during the process. Trends emerging from the collected data were identified.

5.3 Data collection and analysis

Data for the evaluation was collected through desk research (a review of legal documents, reports and other writings), workshops in Accra and Tamale and interviews with a cross-section of stakeholders in these two cities and in Kumasi and Takoradi. This allowed an examination of the consistency of the responses from the different respondents. These four places were selected based on geographical considerations to ensure a fair representation of the country. Greater Accra represented the capital city and the Eastern and Southern regions. Tamale represented the Northern Region, while Kumasi and Takoradi represented the Central and Western Regions respectively.

Collected data was analysed through content analysis, whereby data was coded, classified and summarised to identify emerging trends. The content derived from the in-depth interviews and desk research was analysed at both the latent and manifest levels.

Figure 5.1. Evaluation conceptual framework

Design	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This focused on the design elements of the NPC's intervention programme for the 2016 election cycle. The evaluation assessed whether or not the design was appropriate and based on plausible logic.
Processes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> These are various activities carried out and procedures followed during the 2016 elections. The evaluation assessed the strengths and weaknesses of these processes, including their contributions towards the achievement of the overall NPC objectives.
Outputs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> These are the immediate results or deliverables achieved during the 2016 elections. The outputs were documented and analysed as reported by the NPC and its partners and as observed by the consultant.
Outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The outcomes refer to changes realised in the 2016 election cycle in terms of conflict prevention, management and resolution due to the NPC's approach and activities programming.

5.4 Sampling framework

The purpose of this evaluation was to determine and assess the performance of the NPC during the 2016 election cycle. A purposive sampling method was therefore adopted, whereby individuals, institutions and organisations were targeted. The purposive sampling method ensured that people who were able to speak with authority regarding the activities of the NPC were interviewed. Ninety-seven people drawn from the NPC Secretariat, the Ministry of the Interior, religious and traditional bodies, political parties, civil society organisations (CSOs) and state agencies participated in the evaluation. A list of these participants is attached to this report as Annex 5.

5.5 Limitations

While every effort was made to ensure that the objectives of the evaluation were met, some challenges were faced, especially during the data collection phase, and these have had an impact on the evaluation. The three main challenges were timing, the co-operation and availability of the required stakeholders and reporting bias.

Timing

- The evaluation was conducted during the month of Ramadan and some parts of Ghana are predominantly Muslim. For instance, the workshop in Tamale, which is predominantly Muslim, was held on a Friday, which is the day on which Muslims go to the mosque. This meant that the workshop had to be conducted within four hours (9.00 am to 12.00 pm) to allow participants time to exercise their religion and to avoid keeping them for too long in a workshop, because they were fasting. As a result, the programme was significantly compressed and an agreement was reached with the RPC Executive Secretary that follow-up questions would be communicated to him at a later date if required.

Availability of the required stakeholders

- Some stakeholders in sampled areas were not available for the evaluation because of prior commitments. In some cases, targeted institutions delegated junior officials to meet with the evaluating team and not all the delegated individuals had adequate knowledge of the Ghana peace architecture and the NPC's activities.

Reporting bias

- Given the political context in which the 2016 elections were held, some stakeholders, such as the youth vigilante groups in the Northern Region, tended to exaggerate some issues and their role before, during and after the elections. In order to counteract the possibility of this compromising the quality of the data, a triangulation method was used, which included requesting substantive evidence to enable verification.

6. Evaluation Findings

This findings section follows the conceptual framework outlined in Section 6.1 of this report. A general finding of the evaluation is that the concept of the NPC and its subnational structures is indispensable in the context of Ghana, where historiography clearly shows a myriad of community conflicts with a spillover effect into the elections. The evaluation found a number of strengths and weaknesses in the NPC's design and implementation approaches. This section therefore details the evaluation's findings on the design of the NPC and its programme design, its co-ordination and management, and its implementation process, as well as outputs and immediate outcomes achieved in respect of its strategic objectives, especially Strategic Objective 3, and, finally, its sustainability.

6.1 The NPC's design

While the terms of reference did not originally require the evaluation to focus on the design of the NPC, this was looked at as a basis for assessing the design of the NPC's interventions during the 2016 elections. The rationale for looking at the NPC's design in this way is that there is a direct causal link between this design and the NPC's programme implementation. That is, if the NPC's design were strengthened, it could enhance the capacity of the NPC to deliver on its mandate, while, conversely, a weak design has the potential to compromise the implementation of the peace architecture initiative and subsequently affect the realisation of the objectives of the NPC.

6.1.1 Design elements

Section 2 of the National Peace Council Act (Government of Ghana 2011) states that 'the object of the Council is to facilitate and develop mechanisms for conflict prevention, management, resolution and to build sustainable peace in the country'. This presupposes that the NPC will be representative of all sectors of society and will therefore be acceptable. A look at the structure of the NPC finds an attempt at inclusivity, in that Section 4 of the National Peace Council Act provides that the NPC Board will consist of two persons nominated by the President, one of whom will be a woman, two persons nominated

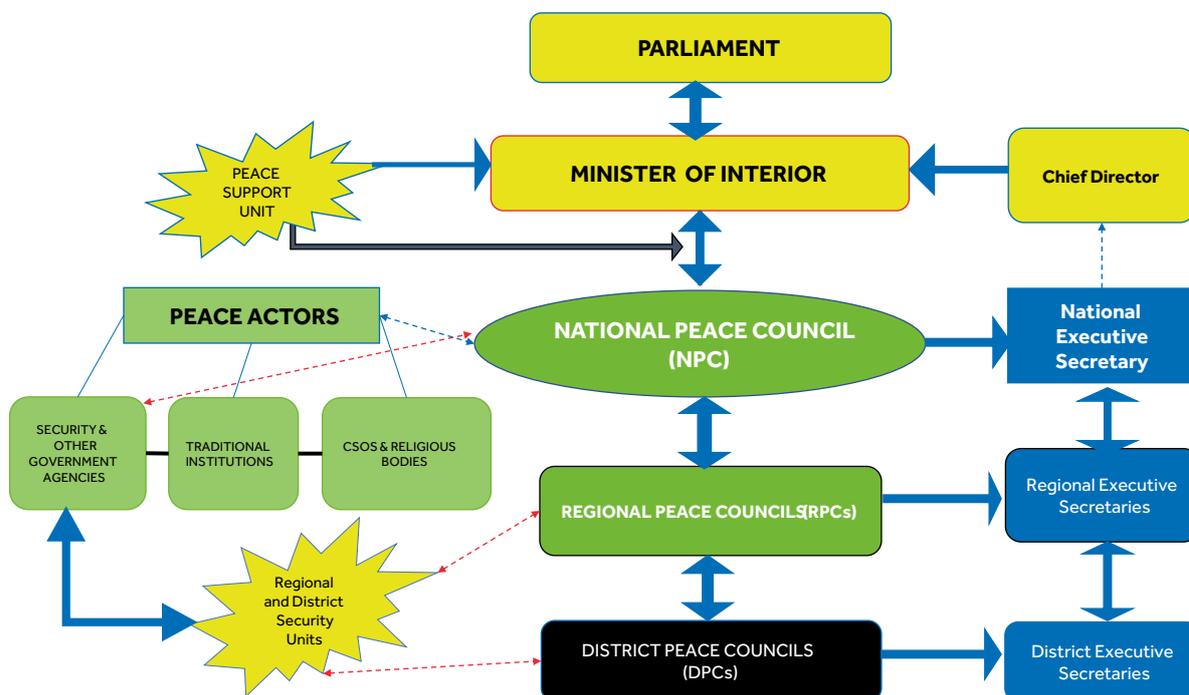
by identifiable groups, one representative of the National House of Chiefs (Section 4(1)(b), (c) and (d)), and one representative nominated by the following bodies:

- i. the Catholic Bishops Conference;
- ii. the Christian Council;
- iii. the Ghana Pentecostal Council;
- iv. the National Council for Christian and Charismatic Churches;
- v. the Ahamadiyya Muslim Mission;
- vi. Al-sunnah Muslims;
- vii. the Tijaaniya Muslim Group;
- viii. practitioners of African traditional religion.

The evaluation found that in Ghanaian society the majority of the above institutions are conservative and led largely by men. There is little chance, if any, that any of the representatives of the abovementioned institutions will be women or young people. The NPC's Strategic Plan 2013–17 commits the council to ensuring inclusivity 'at decision-making levels at the district, regional and national level for conflict prevention, management, resolution, and peace building'. However, of the 13 members of the NPC Board, only one is a woman, nominated by the President in line with Section 4(1)(b) of the National Peace Council Act (NPC Report 2013: 30). This is a weakness in the design of the NPC: representatives of the sections of society that are most affected by conflicts, including people with disabilities, are conspicuously absent from its structure.

Respondents concurred with the observation of this design weakness and noted that it affects the NPC's ability to develop intervention strategies informed by the people who are directly affected by conflict. The evaluation found that lack of gender balance in Ghana is not peculiar to the NPC but a problem that is prevalent across the board. For instance, of the 275 Members of Parliament (MPs), only 30 are female. The evaluation also found that, despite the magnitude of the responsibilities bestowed on it, the NPC Board works on a part-time basis. Furthermore, reporting lines, collaboration and co-ordination between and among CSOs, faith-

Figure 6.1. Structure and reporting lines



based organisations, traditional institutions, state agencies, and the NPC and its substructures are not clearly defined. The scope of work of the NPC Board and the horizontal and vertical linkages are discussed consecutively below.

The NPC Board's scope of work and funding support

Section 6(1) of the National Peace Council Act provides that, as the convening body of the NPC, the NPC Board is to meet at least once every three months for the dispatch of business. None of the members of the board are full time and this leaves an NPC Secretariat official (the National Executive Secretary or a designated director) responsible for the NPC's business on a daily basis. This creates problems because these officials are, as illustrated in Figure 7.1, subordinated to the authority of the Ministry of the Interior, which is supported by the Peace Support Unit (the Peace Support Unit is discussed in the subsection 'Reporting lines' below). The evaluation found that members of the board have been working on a voluntary basis and without allowances despite the fact that NPC duties take them away from their substantive occupations.

In addition, the financial, human, infrastructure and other resources that are required for the proper functioning of the NPC in line with its Strategic Plan 2013–17 have not been made immediately available by the government. For instance, respondents at the NPC Secretariat indicated that the NPC is not allocated funds for capital assets. The first-quarter funds (January–April 2017) were only released at the time of this evaluation in June 2017. Because of this delay, most of the activities since January 2017 have been made possible by the financial support the NPC received from the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). Lack of funding was found to be a major handicap to the NPC and its subnational structures and is largely responsible for the delays in the establishment of the DPCs. This has been exacerbated by the fact that the Peace Fund envisaged in the Strategic Plan 2013–17 has not been established and the NPC depends entirely on government subsidy, which, as mentioned above, has been slow in coming. The Ministry of the Interior acknowledged the funding shortcomings, indicating that it is looking into the matter and has already resolved to increase the amounts to be allocated

to the NPC. The increase was confirmed by the NPC Secretariat, which indicated that the second-quarter budget had been approximately doubled.

Reporting lines

Conceptually, the Peace Council follows a three-tiered structure, which consists of the NPC, the RPCs and the DPCs. Currently, there are nine RPCs established throughout the country, with one in Greater Accra yet to be established because of financial, human and logistical constraints (NPC Secretariat interview, 6 June 2017). The DPCs have not yet been established for similar reasons. As a temporary measure, the NPC has recruited District Executive Secretaries in three districts to interface with peace actors at the district level. Figure 7.1 shows the consultant's interpretation of the structure and reporting lines.

Figure 7.1 illustrates a problem with the NPC's design regarding reporting lines. The National Peace Council Act is unambiguous about the reporting line between the Minister for the Interior and the NPC, as well as between the NPC, the RPCs and the DPCs (Section 33). However, it is very vague about the role of the Peace Support Unit vis-à-vis the NPC. The evaluation found that the Peace Support Unit, which is established by the Minister for the Interior under Section 27 of the National Peace Council Act, is a duplication of the NPC in terms of function. The Peace Support Unit, on the face of it, appears to be an administrative arrangement. However, the fact that it is empowered to liaise directly with the RPCs and the DPCs and advise the Minister for the Interior on peace matters means that it has the potential to effectively bypass the value and role of the NPC should a minister decide not to work with the NPC.

The evaluation found that, despite the generally acceptable composition of its board, the NPC is perceived by some stakeholders as partial in its operations at times. One of the three major parties indicated that 'the NPC has not always been a neutral arbiter because it was perceived at times to be fighting alongside government. Its modus operandi should be diplomacy driven instead of media driven.' According to one of the stakeholders, perceptions about its neutrality or lack of it are one of the main 'occupational hazards' for the NPC, especially when dealing with political parties. A political party that is found to be in the wrong by the NPC is likely to accuse the NPC of bias. This is

because an indictment of such a party may be used as ammunition by its opponents to gain political mileage. In its strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT) analysis in the Strategic Plan 2013–17, the NPC recognises that perceptions are one of the threats to its work.

In addition to the problem of perceptions, the evaluation found that there is a level of ignorance on the part of some stakeholders regarding the NPC's mandated role, leading to unrealistic expectations that it will solve all problems. It was also found that political parties also deliberately used the NPC at times as a scapegoat for their limitations in fighting their political battles. For instance, one political party accused the NPC of not speaking out against what it deemed to be 'bogus' political parties that were formed ahead of the 2016 elections. This accusation was made notwithstanding the fact that the party is fully aware that, in line with the Political Parties Act, Act No. 574 of 2000 (Government of Ghana 2000), the NPC does not have powers over the registration or de-registration of political parties. Instead of raising concerns with the Electoral Commission (EC) or courts of law as the relevant institutions, the party opted to create the public perception that the NPC was failing to do its job. In another example, the NPC was accused of having been silent when a group of alleged foreign mercenaries were arrested having been in Ghana to train youth vigilantes. The NPC was expected to issue a statement in this regard even though this issue was of a criminal nature and the suspects had already been arrested by the police and brought before the courts of law. A perception was therefore created that the NPC did not speak out because it supported the political party alleged to have recruited the suspects.

Collaboration and co-ordination

The evaluation found that, although the legal framework empowers the NPC to spearhead peace efforts and perform a co-ordinating role for all the other actors involved in the prevention, management and resolution of conflicts, collaboration is ambiguous and co-ordination not structured. Figure 7.1 shows that, whereas there is strong and clear collaboration and co-ordination between the state security agencies at the regional and national levels, the link between these agencies and the NPC's structures (illustrated with the red broken lines) is not equally pronounced. According to the National Peace Council Act, the NPC's structures

and the state security agencies are supposed to liaise with each other. This was found to be the case to some extent; for example, collaboration and co-ordination is evident in the activities of the National Elections Early Warning and Response Group (NEEWARG) and the Regional Elections Early Warning and Response Groups (REEWARGs).

However, in other instances, the state security agencies, such as the police, were reported to treat the NPC's structures with suspicion, even accusing them of taking over police duties. Moreover, the security of the RPC's members was not necessarily guaranteed. The evaluation found that the alleged suspicion was partly caused by the fact that, in some areas, especially in opposition strongholds, people had little trust in state institutions, including the police, the EC and the National Commission for Civic Education (NCCE). In some areas, participants indicated that there were fears that the EC would not ensure free and fair elections, while the NCCE was seen as an agent of the governing party. Where these perceptions existed, it became difficult for the RPCs to carry out joint activities with these two institutions.

The NPC's Strategic Plan 2013–17 acknowledges the many and varied peace actors and undertakes to harmonise and co-ordinate all peace efforts in Ghana by developing an inventory of all existing programmes and evaluating them to ensure that concepts, definitions, targets and methodologies are harmonised (NPC 2013). However, the evaluation found that six months before the end of the strategic plan period, the NPC had not yet achieved in this aim. Consequently, collaboration and co-ordination with other non-state peace actors is not consistent and it is at times done haphazardly. This leads to the duplication of interventions and, occasionally, outright competition among the non-state peace actors or between these organisations and the NPC's structures. It is also a problem that some of the organisations that have, in one way or another, interfaced with the NPC do not necessarily have a mandate for conflict management. This was evident during the Accra evaluation workshop, where some organisations indicated that they did not necessarily have specific conflict management programmes. The NPC was also said to conflate co-ordination with control and this was reported as a source of resistance at times by non-state peace actors that raise resources and implement their own activities without co-ordinating with the NPC.

Management

The evaluation found that there was lack of internal cohesion in the management and programming of the NPC's activities, with a top-down approach used for both. The evaluation found that there is a weak link between the national and regional levels in terms of programming. The understanding of the regional-level structures is that programming should follow a bottom-up approach. However, some RPC respondents indicated that sometimes the NPC Secretariat does not consult them when planning NPC interventions. As a result, NPC interventions are not always informed by local realities and this at times leads to a clash of national and regional programmes. The evaluation found that, in addition to the challenge in programming, there is also no monitoring and evaluation mechanism for the national and regional activities.

6.1.2 Strengths in the design

The strengths in the design are as follows:

- membership of the NPC Board, which is made up of eminent people;
- decentralised structure of national, regional and district levels;
- recognition of other peace actors in the design.

6.1.3 Challenges in the design

The challenges in the design are as follows:

- having part-time board members and weak infrastructure support to the non-executive chairperson of the NPC Board;
- exclusion of marginalised groups, including women, young people and people with disabilities;
- not fully articulating the co-ordination and reporting systems of the peace architecture, thereby leaving co-ordination and collaboration to the individual peace actor's will to co-operate;
- executive control of the NPC through the Minister for the Interior;
- creation of an advisory structure (the Peace Support Unit) with roles duplicating NPC roles.

6.2 Planning

As mentioned in earlier sections of this report, the NPC developed a five-year strategic plan through which it aspires to be fully discharging its mandate as a functional institution by end of 2017. Strategic Objective 3 of the NPC is to facilitate prevention and management of electoral violence. To achieve this, the NPC planned to partner with other actors including the media, the NCCE, the EC, political leaders, MPs and the Small Arms and Light Weapons Commission to promote tolerance and respect for peaceful elections, specifically by:

- engaging all political parties on strategies to ensure peaceful elections;
- collaborating with key stakeholders to undertake activities to reduce the likelihood of conflict;
- engaging the media on strategies for peace-driven journalism;
- engaging other governance institutions in the electoral processes and developing strategies to ensure inclusiveness, fairness and transparency;
- promoting peace by supporting the creation, in conflict areas, of:
 - platforms for religious and traditional leaders, especially in the Northern, Upper East, West and Volta regions;
 - regional platforms for interactions between political parties and chiefs, the media, security, women, youth leaders, and CSOs;
- strengthening mediation platforms in conflict areas such as Bawku, Dagbon, Alavanyo/ Nkonya and Hohoe;
- conducting a post-election review of experiences and lessons learned in all regions.

Pursuant to the strategic objectives, the NPC carried out a review of the 2012 elections with a view to identifying lessons learned and informing its programming for the 2016 elections. Using a staggered approach to the review, it held meetings with key stakeholders from August to December 2015. In Accra the NPC met with governance institutions and the media, while in Koforidua it met with political parties. Finally, a meeting with CSOs was held in Tamale. The evaluation

found that, following these post-2012 election review meetings, the NPC did not develop a comprehensive work plan detailing a set of annual activities to be carried out before the election year, 2016. Instead, the NPC Secretariat produced the 2016 annual work plan shown in Table 7.1.

6.2.1 Strengths in planning

The strengths in planning are as follows:

- use of the 2012 elections as a baseline for 2016 planning;
- use of the Strategic Plan 2013–17 as a basis for NPC interventions;
- pre-implementation training of the NPC and RPC members.

6.2.2 Challenges in planning

The challenges in planning are as follows:

- lack of internal cohesion in programming;
- crowding of activities within the election year instead of spreading them throughout the electoral cycle;
- funding problems making it difficult to match the budget with the planned activities.

6.3 Implementation of activities

The evaluation found that the NPC followed the Strategic Plan 2013–17 in the implementation of its work plan. Its intervention approach was also found to be responsive to the context in which the 2016 elections were held. The NPC collaborated with other key stakeholders in Ghana's peace architecture at the national and subnational levels. These included the police, the EC, the NCCE, the National Media Commission (NMC), media houses, traditional institutions, religious bodies and CSOs. However, the evaluation found that not all these actors necessarily had strong expertise in conflict management. Therefore, some of the implementation was a learning process for them.

The NPC programming was found to have had a stronger focus on the pre-election and election phases and a weaker focus on the post-election phase. As a result, the NPC was not well prepared to deal with the post-election conflicts triggered by the euphoria of election victory. This led to criticisms from some respondents, who pointed out that 'the NPC has done very well in the pre-

Table 6.1. NPC 2016 annual work plan

Outcome	Activities	Timeline
National peace and stability is enhanced through a harmonised and co-ordinated peace mechanism	Launch of Peace Fund	April
	Build capacity of NPC and RPC members and staff on conflict prevention, management, mediation and dialogue	February to March
	Training/capacity-building for selected peace actors, especially traditional and religious leaders, to deal with elections and other conflicts	April to May
	Development of conflict mediation strategy and modules	January to February
	Training traditional and religious leaders in conflict management and resolution mechanisms	February
	Continue engagement with stakeholders (the police, the EC, the NMC, the NCCE, the media and CSOs) for peaceful elections before, during and after the 2016 general elections	February to December
Ghanaians are more prone to informed behaviour with increased respect for and tolerance of diversity, and increased knowledge of, skills for, and positive attitudes about sustainable peace	Community meetings for chiefs and their people on violence-free elections	March
	Forums for traditional and religious leaders on elections	March
	Forums for CSOs and Community Based Organisations on elections	April
	Forums for constituency-level party representatives on elections	March to April
	Continue with religious tolerance dialogues in a further five regions	
Ghana generally enjoys peace and tranquillity, before, during and after the 2016 presidential and parliamentary elections	Development of peace-messaging programmes, T-shirts, banners and other items	February
	Peace advertisements on radio, television and websites	March to December
	Design and implementation of advocacy and national dialogue programmes	February to December
Improved national capacity to manage conflict through strengthened conflict management and resolution mechanisms	Development of national early warning systems (EWSs)	March
	Procure ICT equipment for DPCs	June

election and election phases under very difficult circumstances but it has become too quiet since the elections and this leads to fear and apprehension creeping in. It should issue regular press releases and should have been among the first to condemn the killing of the army officer Major Maxwell Mahama' (Convention People's Party (CPP), interview, 12 June 2017).

It was also found that, although the NPC's 2016 activities listed in Table 7.1 were designed to be conducted for and with other peace actors, there was no structured horizontal consultation process in place whereby the NPC's work plan could be shared with these actors before implementation. Where consultations were carried out, respondents indicated that not all institutions were represented by appropriate people because some heads of organisations delegated subordinates with no authority to commit their organisations to supporting the NPC processes. Therefore, these

shortcomings contributed to implementation challenges. The evaluation also found out that, generally, the NPC's ability to implement its activities was hamstrung by:

- lack of financial resources;
- limited human resources (the entire staff currently numbers 31, of which only 12 are programme staff);
- lack of facilities, equipment and infrastructure.

The key findings on the NPC's performance in relation to its 2016 work plan are set out in the following paragraphs.

Outcomes 1: National peace and stability is enhanced through a harmonised and co-ordinated peace mechanism

- a. The NPC developed a mediation strategy as well as a training manual on mediation with financial support from the UNDP and USAID and technical support from the Institute of Development Studies. The NPC also worked with the NMC to develop materials on peace.
- b. Using the training manual, the NPC carried out a training programme for its NPC and RPC members on conflict prevention and mediation to enable them to prevent, manage and resolve conflicts, as well as sustain peace in their respective regions ahead of the general elections. A total of 103 members of the RPCs across the country were trained together with the 13 NPC members. However, given that the NPC has yet to establish the Greater Accra RPC and the DPCs countrywide, the number of its available trained personnel falls short of meeting its capacity needs.
- c. Training was also undertaken for other peace actors, including traditional and religious leaders and CSOs, to inform them on the management of election-related conflicts and alternative election dispute resolution mechanisms. The chiefs, queen mothers and selected religious leaders from Cape Coast and four paramount chiefs from the Western Region were the first beneficiaries of the NPC training programme. A total of 20 meetings were held for CSOs and another 20 for religious and traditional leaders in selected places countrywide.
- d. The public and private media were also trained both in the electoral process and in election reporting for the pre-election, election and post-election phases. The journalists were also introduced to conflict management.
- e. The NPC further trained all the political party executives in all the 275 constituencies and was able to avert violent confrontations between NDC and NPP functionaries at meetings held at Twifo Praso in the Central Region of Ghana and Suhum in the Eastern Region.

The evaluation found that one of the major threats to peace during and between elections in Ghana is the new phenomenon of vigilante groups. Although this started in the Northern Region, where political parties, especially the NDC and

NPP, are accused of recruiting young people to carry out violence against political opponents, this vigilantism has spread rapidly across other regions. This added to similar problems like the 'macho men' (ballot box snatchers) that exist in the Central Region. The vigilantes were described by one of the respondents as 'a law unto themselves' and they were accused of most of the post-election violence. For instance, the lynching of a senior army officer, Major Maxwell Mahama, by residents of Denkyira-Obuasi in the Central Region on 29 May 2017 (one week before the evaluation) was seen by some respondents as a consequence of the impunity enjoyed by the vigilantes. There were other cited cases: an attack on the Ashanti Region Security Co-ordinator and an attack on a court of law while in session by vigilante elements.

Some members of the vigilante groups participated in the evaluation workshop in Tamale on 9 June 2017. Some informed the evaluation team that they were formed as a result of lack of trust in state security agencies and that their job is to protect the members of their parties. However, others indicated that they were formed as a counter to the violence directed at their party members by their political opponents. The evaluation found that one of the major achievements of the RPCs in the Northern and Central Regions was the training of the vigilante groups and more than a thousand macho men in Kumasi on peace education. The RPCs in Tamale and Kumasi were able to get the vigilante groups and the macho men to sign peace accords in their respective contexts. The respondents in these regions believe that the reduction of conflict between the vigilante groups before and during polling day, as well as the reduction in the numbers of attempted ballot box snatching cases to only one in Kumasi, can be partly attributed to the RPC's initiatives.

It is clear therefore that the NPC has had mixed results. On the one hand, it had considerable success in terms of conducting training for many participants from across the various sectors. On the other hand, it has not achieved some activities. For instance, it has failed to establish the Peace Fund, which would assist it in widening and deepening its interventions, and prevent it being constrained by dependence on the government, as is currently the case. The evaluation could not establish the extent to which the skills obtained from the NPC training were used and to what effect. This is because, as indicated in subsection 7.1.14 above, no monitoring

and evaluation mechanism was developed by the NPC and there was also no co-ordinated arrangement to get feedback from the trainees. Most of the organisations that benefited from this training also had their own training programmes.

Outcomes 2: Ghanaians are more prone to informed behaviour with increased respect for and tolerance of diversity, and increased knowledge of, skills for, and positive attitudes about sustainable peace

- a. As indicated in Section 7.2 of this report, one of the effective ways in which the NPC carried out its functions, especially ahead of the 2016 elections, was through collaboration with other actors during its outreach programme. The NPC invited the EC and NCCE to participate and educate communities on electoral process and civic rights and duties.
- b. The NPC also carried out a nationwide voter education programme for different sections of society at the constituency level. Before this roadshow, it had carefully identified the conflict hotspots that were to be targeted throughout the country. This voter education programme was undertaken for 50 communities, 20 CSOs and 20 religious and traditional leaders.
- c. In an effort to maximise collaboration ahead of the 2016 polls, the NPC also liaised with the state security agencies. To this end, meetings were held with both the Inspector General of Police and the Office of the Chief of Defence Staff in order to share notes on preparations for peaceful elections. Similar meetings were also held at the regional level.
- d. As a way of ensuring political tolerance, the NPC, with the support of the UNDP and Institute for Democratic Governance, organised the 2nd High-level Meeting of National Leaders under the theme 'Strengthening Ghana's democratic stability, peace and unity' at the Movenpick Ambassador Hotel, Accra, on 1 December 2016. At this meeting, all seven presidential candidates, including the incumbent President John Dramani Mahama, made a public commitment to peaceful elections. Besides the presidential candidates, the event was attended by the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) Chairperson

and President of Liberia, Her Excellency Ellen Johnson Sirleaf; former President Jerry John Rawlings; Dr Mohamed Ibn Chambas, UN Special Representative to West Africa and the Sahel; and Dr Josephine Ojiambo, Commonwealth Deputy Secretary-General. The members of the international community, including the Commonwealth, were invited to deliver goodwill messages.

The evaluation found that it took two attempts by the NPC to accomplish the plan to have the presidential candidates sign the peace pledge. In the first instance, the candidates did not co-operate and cited busy campaigning schedules. As the UNDP respondent put it, 'this signing ceremony was one of the major highlights of the NPC's achievements given that it was not easy to get participation of all the candidates and also their co-operation in signing the pledge due to highly contested election' (UNDP, telephone interview, 15 June 2016). The NPC indicated that, while there may have been other reasons for the unavailability of the candidates at the first attempt, a lesson for the future is that the timing of this initiative has to be carefully planned.

Outcomes 3: Ghana generally enjoys peace and tranquillity, before, during and after 2016 presidential and parliamentary elections

The evaluation found that the NPC and its partners developed peace-messaging programmes and applied innovative methods and media to efficiently and effectively deliver improved results in their peace initiatives. In the run-up to the 2016 elections, the NEEWARG and REEWARG structures produced peace-messaging programmes to create awareness of non-violence through media such as print and electronic media adverts, jingles, billboards and, in some regions, door-to-door peace campaigns.

Outcomes 4: Improved national capacity to manage conflict through strengthened conflict management and resolution mechanisms

- a. Development of national early warning systems (EWSs)

With technical and financial support from the West Africa Network for Peacebuilding (WANEP), the NPC set up the NEEWARG and REEWARGs. The primary objective of these structures is to serve as platforms for the development of responses to latent and

manifest conflict situations. For instance, the NPC reported that, through the NEEWARG and REEWARGs, potential violence such as occurred at Nsawam, Suhum and Asunfo, was averted. The structures also made recommendations to relevant bodies and peace actors for appropriate responses to the various conflict typologies. During the 2016 elections, these structures served as indispensable sources of information for the EMB and state security agencies. The UNDP, together with the Canadian High Commission and Swedish Embassy, procured ten vehicles for the RPCs as a means to ease their transport challenges. These vehicles were, however, delivered after the elections and they are now being used in post-election activities by the NPC and RPCs.

b. Establishment of a situation room

The NPC set up a situation room in Accra as a mechanism for real-time information exchange for rapid response to conflict situations during the 2016 elections. Two other situation rooms were established in

Kumasi and Tamale. The NPC's 2016 report shows that the Accra situation room had three parts, namely the data gathering room, the analysis room and the decision room. The data gathering room was responsible for direct communication with observers in the field. They collated all the data received through an SMS platform and from other media channels for analysis. The analysis room was made up of ten experts comprising lawyers, political scientists, peace and security experts, human rights experts, gender experts and communication experts, who were responsible for interpreting the data for informed responses. The decision room comprised eminent persons who could use their good offices to influence positive responses to identified threats.

A total of 750 observers were deployed across all the ten regions of Ghana to monitor, analyse and facilitate responses to violent threats to the peaceful conduct of the elections. The situation room operations focused on areas that had been identified as conflict hotspots across the country. Valuable

Table 6.2. SWOT analysis

<p>Strengths</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Composition of the NPC Board comprising eminent persons from religious and traditional institutions • Strategic collaboration with other peace actors • Establishment and co-ordination of successful early warning mechanisms (NEEWARG and REEWARGs) • Effective public outreach methods for peace education, mediation and prevention of conflict • Targeted training activities, especially in conflict hotspots • Use of soft diplomacy in dealing with various actors • Decentralised structure with national, regional and district levels 	<p>Weaknesses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of financial and human resources • Lack of gender representation and inclusivity of marginalised sectors of society in NPC structures • Failure to follow the electoral cycle approach in activity planning and implementation, leading to delays in activity implementation • Temporary nature of the board, instead of having a full-time board • Over-dependence on donor support • Poor interface between the national office and the RPC's programmes, which has led to delays and duplications • Co-ordination of peace actors' activities outside the EWSs • Accountability through the executive instead of direct accountability to parliament
<p>Opportunities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The signing of the peace pledge by all presidential candidates during the 2016 election and the signing of the peace pledges by the vigilante groups and macho men were successes that the NPC and RPCs can replicate in future elections • The successes of the NPC and RPCs are an opportunity for continued development partner support, including from the Commonwealth • Lessons from the 2012 and 2016 elections present an opportunity for the NPC to share information and best practices on conflict prevention, management and resolution in the West African region and the continent as a whole 	<p>Threats</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Perception that the NPC is an appendage of one of the major parties • Lack of financial resources • Lack of collaboration with state security agencies in some areas • Control by and accountability through the executive instead of direct accountability to parliament

information generated by the situation rooms was shared with the EMB, election observers and embassies. The information was also provided to the general public in a quest to ensure that peace prevailed.

The situation room was a joint initiative with WANEP, the Commission on Human Rights and Administrative Justice (CHRAJ), the Kofi Annan International Peacekeeping Training Centre (KAIPTC), the Legon Centre for International Affairs and Diplomacy, Transform Ghana Peace Project, Trans4orm Network Ghana and Blogging Ghana/Ghana Decides. It was jointly financed by USAID, the Australian Development Agency, the Swedish International Development Agency and the Danish International Development Agency.

The NPC had also planned to procure ICT equipment for the DPCs. This was not done because of the delay in establishing the DPCs.

6.3.1 Strengths in activities

The strengths were as follows:

- social capital that the NPC and RPCs possess based on their composition;
- successful establishment and hosting of the EWSs and situation rooms;
- mastery of the co-ordination of the NEEWARG and REEWARGs;
- targeted training activities, especially in conflict hotspots;
- signing of a peace pledge by all presidential candidates;

- signing of peace pledges by the vigilantes and the macho men in Tamale and Kumasi respectively;
- use of soft diplomacy and two-track processes in dealing with various actors.

6.3.2 Challenges in activities

The challenges were as follows:

- lack of financial resources and limited human resources;
- lack of facilities and equipment and communication infrastructure;
- failure to follow the electoral cycle in activity planning and implementation;
- lack of collaboration with security agencies in some areas;
- late implementation of activities in the final year;
- poor co-ordination within the NPC structure and between the NPC and some peace actors, leading to a clash of activities.

6.4 SWOT analysis

In winding up the findings on the NPC's design and programming and the implementation of its 2016 activities, the report provides a summary of the results of a SWOT analysis (Table 7.2). This analysis helps to show what worked, what did not work and areas on which the NPC needs to focus in order to consolidate its gains or in which it needs to do more.

7. Conclusions

The Ghana peace architecture evolved from a concept into reality as a fully-fledged legal entity in 2011, when the NPC was formed. The evaluation findings show that the NPC has added value to peace efforts in Ghana, especially during the 2016 elections. Generally, respondents indicated that there was evidence of change in levels of election-related conflict since the investiture of the NPC. The evaluation has, however, established that the NPC has some design-related shortcomings that inhibit performance. These include its inextricable link with the executive in terms of accountability, which resulted in its impartiality being questioned by some respondents. There is also an ambiguity in terms of the scope of its collaboration with state agencies and co-ordination with non-state actors, and this has led to duplication of efforts and general delay in implementation. The evaluation found that, overall, the majority of the interviewees were positive about the NPC's performance during the 2016 elections against a background of political polarisation. It can be concluded therefore that the affirmation of the overall value and performance of the NPC in the 2016 elections represents an inimitable opportunity for it to strengthen the peace-making agenda, enhance the Ghanaians' faith in electoral processes and improve its institutional reputation.

8. Recommendations

8.1 The NPC's design

8.1.1 There is a need to for the design of NPC to be revisited to address the character of its board, including inclusivity issues. Given that this is a long-term recommendation, it is suggested that short-term inclusivity mechanisms be adopted. This may include ensuring that all the members appointed by the President are female and that they include young women. A request can also be made to traditional and religious bodies that their nominations take inclusivity into account where possible. The law also allows the board to co-opt people with special skills in its engagements. This presents another opportunity to ensure the participation of all sectors of society in its business.

8.1.2 The design also has to deal with the issue of both the perceived and real capacity gaps of the NPC to enable it effectively carry out its activities. This may include a re-examination of the law to find a way to remove the NPC from the Ministry of the Interior and place it under the control of parliament. There is also a need to reconsider the temporary nature of the board, which clearly affects its ability to carry out its obligations. An approach in this regard may include having a full-time chairperson and or a subcommittee of the board to work with the Executive Secretary on a daily basis.

8.2 Implementation

8.2.1 The problem of human and financial resources capacity was mentioned by a number of respondents. The NPC should engage relevant government departments and independent organisations to solicit funds to address this problem.

8.2.2 It was clear from the evaluation that the NPC has not been able to achieve all the objectives set out in the Strategic Plan 2013–17 for a number of reasons. Given that the current strategic plan is coming to an end, the NPC needs to urgently review it and develop a new

road map for the next five years, 2017–22. Commonwealth support for the revision of the strategic plan is highly recommended

8.2.3 The evaluation also recommends that, in order to deal with stakeholder expectations, the NPC has to reach out to stakeholders systematically to ensure an inclusive peace architecture in which all stakeholders understand their roles. In order to achieve this, the NPC has to follow the strategic direction enshrined in the Strategic Plan 2013–17 to 'form a Peace Partnership for Ghana, which will involve ascension to a Memorandum of Understanding' intended to:

- recognise the NPC as the co-ordinating body of peace initiatives in Ghana;
- agree to a harmonised, co-ordinated and collaborative operational structure and processes for peace initiatives in Ghana;
- agree to joint programming.

8.2.4 Related to the above, co-ordination of individual peace actors' activities other than in the EWSs has to be improved.

8.2.5 There is a need to ensure balanced planning with adequate attention to the pre-election, election and post-election phases to avoid repeating the 2016 result, with the NPC and its partners ill prepared for the post-election tensions.

8.2.6 Many of the NPC's interventions require time, and this means that it has to ensure timely implementation of activities in line with the electoral cycle to avoid delays in programming and implementation, as well as duplication of efforts, which were cited as one of the major weaknesses of its interventions during the 2016 elections.

8.2.7 The NPC has to improve on its outreach processes for maximum coverage of conflict prone regions and areas.

8.3 Outputs and outcomes

- 8.3.1 The pre-election signing of the peace pledge by presidential candidates should be repeated in the 2020 elections and a similar commitment should be encouraged by parliamentary candidates. The signing of the peace pledges at the regional level should also be replicated in all regions and at the district level.
- 8.3.2 Collaboration outside EWSs should be improved and implemented in all the regions in the 2020 elections.
- 8.3.3 There is a need for the NPC to creatively deal with the implementation challenges highlighted in Section 9.2, to ensure the realisation of outcomes and the impact of interventions.

8.4 Sustainability

- 8.4.1 There is an urgent need for the establishment of the DPCs, especially in identified hotspot areas, as an incremental step towards the establishment of these structures across all regions in Ghana. This will ensure that the RPCs are not overstretched, especially when there are many conflict hotspots in the regions.
- 8.4.2 Continuous capacity-building of NPC, RPC and DPC members is highly recommended to ensure maintenance of the momentum from the 2016 elections.
- 8.4.3 There is a need for continued funding of the NPC's activities by development partners for it to be able to consolidate the gains made and achieve maximum impact. In this regard, it is strongly recommended that the Commonwealth considers supporting the NPC, especially in peace architecture co-ordination endeavours, because this is a specific area that is not yet supported.

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Annex 1. Methodology

Method	Source	Comments
i. Document review of the legal framework and key NPC documents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Constitution of Ghana • National Peace Council Act (Act 818, 2011) • Political Parties Act (2000) • Public Elections Regulations (CI 15, 1996) • Presidential Elections Law 1992 (as amended) • NPC Report 2016 • NPC Report 2012 • NPC policy documents (Strategic Plan 2013–17) • NPC Operational Plan 	Necessary to generate background information to inform the development of data collection tools and instrumental for informing contextual considerations
ii. Literature review	Various reports: international, regional and subregional election observation reports and domestic election observation reports	Used to assess observers' feedback on the 2016 elections with regard to conflict prevention, management and resolution
iii. Key informant/ in-depth interviews	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NPC office bearers • A sample of regional and district NPC officials • Representatives of the UNDP and other NPC partners • Representatives of political parties • Representatives of CSOs • Representatives of the media • Representatives of the Ghana Police Service • Representatives of the Ghana chiefs • Academics • Representatives of women's and youth groups 	Necessary to generate primary data

Annex 2. Evaluation Framework

Evaluation criteria	Evaluation questions/areas of evaluation	Sources of information	Data collection and analysis methods
Design	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Was the NPC's strategy adequately developed to guide operational plan implementation? What are the objectives of the strategy? Was the NPC's Operational Plan design appropriate for the 2016 election cycle? How dynamic was the design in responding to implementation opportunities and challenges? What design elements would you change now with the benefit of hindsight? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> NPC policy documents NPC Operational Plan NPC reports 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Desk review Key interviews with selected stakeholders in Ghana
Implementation Process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What activities were carried out during the 2016 electoral cycle? What process was followed in carrying out NPC activities? Was the adopted strategy responsive to the various contextual dynamics of the 2016 elections? Which stakeholders did the NPC engage with at the national and subnational levels? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> NPC Operational Plan NPC reports Stakeholder and partner reports Election Observation Mission reports 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Desk review Key interviews with selected stakeholders in Ghana
Outputs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What outputs were realised as a result of NPC interventions? To what extent was progress made to move beyond outputs towards outcomes? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> NPC 2016 reports Stakeholder and partner reports Field work 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Desk review Key interviews with selected stakeholders in Ghana

Evaluation criteria	Evaluation questions/areas of evaluation	Sources of information	Data collection and analysis methods
Outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To what extent has the NPC achieved its intended objectives? • More specifically, to what extent has the NPC contributed to enhancing the capacity of Ghana's peace architecture before, during and after the general elections in 2016? • What key achievements and milestones were reached through the NPC's activities in fostering credible, peaceful and democratic elections? • To what extent were the 2012 recommendations to the NPC by observers and key actors effected ahead of the 2016 elections? • What were the key gaps in achievements? • What were the constraints on achievements? • What was the efficacy of the NPC's engagement with partners in the peace architecture? • How else could the NPC have been more effective? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NPC 2016 reports • Stakeholder and partner reports • Field work 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Desk review • Key interviews with selected stakeholders in Ghana
Sustainability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are the NPC's activities and results likely to be sustainable beyond the 2016 election cycle? • What particular aspects of the NPC's results can be replicated in the next elections? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NPC Report 2016 • Stakeholder and partner reports • Election Observation Mission reports • Field work 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Desk review • Key interviews with selected stakeholders in Ghana
Co-ordination and management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How have the NPC's activities been managed and co-ordinated? • What were the institutional and management arrangements for programming, managing, monitoring and evaluating the NPC's work? • How effective were these institutional and management arrangements? • Were the communication channels and mechanisms adequate and appropriate for the co-ordination of the NPC's activities? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NPC Report 2016 • Stakeholder and partner reports • Field work 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Desk review • Key interviews with selected stakeholders in Ghana

Annex 3. Evaluation Standards

Evaluation standard	Application in the evaluation
Utility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The perspectives, procedures and rationale used to interpret the findings will be carefully described to make clear the bases for value judgements that will be made. • The evaluation report will clearly describe the NPC, including its mandate and procedures, so that essential information is provided and is easily understood. • Recommendations will be provided in a comprehensible manner to encourage follow-through by the NPC and its partners.
Feasibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Efforts will be made to ensure that the evaluation procedures will be practical, to keep disruption to identified respondents to a minimum while necessary information is obtained. • The evaluation will be conducted with an understanding of the different positions of NPC structures to ensure their cooperation may be obtained. • Attempts will be made to ensure that the evaluation will be carried out efficiently and produce information of sufficient value that the resources expended can be justified.
Propriety	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The evaluation will be designed to help the NPC address its challenges and effectively carry out its mandate. • The evaluation will be complete and fair in its examination and recording of the strengths and weaknesses of the NPC to ensure that strengths can be built upon and problem areas addressed. • We will ensure that the full set of evaluation findings, along with pertinent limitations, are made known to the NPC.
Accuracy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The election period being evaluated will be described and documented clearly and accurately. • The context of the 2016 election cycle will be examined in enough detail that the likely influences on events can be identified. • The information-gathering procedures have been chosen and will be implemented to ensure that the interpretation is valid for the intended use. • The information collected, processed and reported in the evaluation will be systematically reviewed, and any errors found will be corrected. • Given that the choice of methodology for this evaluation is qualitative, this qualitative data will be appropriately and systematically analysed so that evaluation questions are effectively answered. • The conclusions reached in this evaluation will be explicitly justified so that they can be assessed by the evaluation beneficiary. • Attempts will be made to ensure that reporting procedures guard against distortion caused by the personal feelings and biases of any party to the evaluation, so that the evaluation report will fairly reflect the evaluation findings.

Annex 4. Work Plan

Table A4.1. Proposed work plan

Project phase	Key activities	Expected deliverables	Timeframes
Phase 1: Project inception and design of tools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Define and agree on project objectives, scope, approach and methodology, deliverables, duration and resources with the Commonwealth Secretariat Review literature from sources relevant to the evaluation Collate and synthesise desktop data Develop a draft evaluation questionnaire and in-depth interview guide according to project objectives and scope 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project contract Project plan Project inception report 	2 days
Inception meeting with NPC and Commonwealth Secretariat	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Agree on project objectives, scope, methodology and deliverables Revise and finalise the interview guide, incorporating inputs and comments from the NPC and the Commonwealth Secretariat 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Revised evaluation interview guide 	1 day
Phase 2: Data collection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Arrange for interviews with target respondents in workshops in Accra, Kumasi, Takoradi and Tamale Debriefing meeting with the NPC 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Transcripts/field notes 	8 days
Data analysis and evaluation report	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Combine desktop and fieldwork findings to answer key evaluation questions Formulate conclusions on specific aspects of the evaluation Prepare draft evaluation report 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Draft evaluation report 	7 days
Phase 3: Submit draft evaluation report to Commonwealth Secretariat	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Present key findings to the Commonwealth Secretariat. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Comments to evaluation report 	1 day
Incorporation of Commonwealth Secretariat comments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prepare final evaluation report incorporating agreed changes and amendments as proposed by Commonwealth Secretariat. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Final evaluation report 	1 day
Presentation of final report to Commonwealth Secretariat	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> By email 		
Total number of project days			20 days

Annex 5. List of Respondents

No.	Name	Organisation	Gender
Accra: 7 June 2017			
1	Michael Boadu	EC	M
2	Kobby Annan	Gamiy Commission	
3	George Amoh	NPC	M
4	Euphemia Akos Dzathor	Independent development practitioner	F
5	Janet Farney-Kum	NPC	F
6	Bof Onyineh	NPC	F
7	Yaw Asamwah	APS	F
8	AF Yakubu	FOSDA	
9	Edward K Jombla	WANEP	M
10	Major General Carl Colemom	NEEWARG/CFI	M
11	Samuel Amankwah	Interior	M
12	Afua Yakohene	LEGADIUG	F
13	Kwaku Dalik		
14	Mawusi Dumenu	CDD-Ghana	M
15	Awelana Candida	Youth Initiative	F
16	K Jenadu Ivon	AABN	
17	Keita Rose Atkinson	IBIS	F
18	Festus Kofi Audyn	KAIPTC	M
19	Tawina Hemas	Peace Tower of Africa	
20	Joycelyn Ida Amos	Peace Tower of Africa	F
21	Damiel Tetteh Oku	Regent	M
22	Mary Turkson		F
23	Babayaa	Tiyaniyya Muslim	M
24	Sarpanaa Owusu	NPC	
25	KH Osei-Aante	Cost Plan Consult	M
26	Loretta Asane	NPC	F
27	Johnson Opoku	NCCE	M
28	K Alberty	Coalition of Domestic Election Observers (CODEO)	M
29	Francis Apeah-Aikin	WANEP	M
30	Dr Kudonoo	GHACMA NEEWARG	M
31	Nana Yaa Nyarko	GHACMA	M
32	E Tetteh-Wayo	NCCE	
33	Mabel Munufu	NCCE	F
34	Prof. Emmanuel Asante	NPC	M
Tamale: 9 June 2017			
35	Alhaji Mohammed Wahab	RPC	M

No.	Name	Organisation	Gender
36	Hajja Zanatu Abdul-R	RPC	M
37	Alhaji A Razali	NCCE	M
38	M Abdallah Mbelayim	SYA	M
39	Hafsatu Sey Sumani	NOESAAC	F
40	Andani Natogmah Issah	EC	M
41	AA Madugu	CPP	M
42	Yar-Naa Hafiz	NPP	M
43	Mohammed Mashood	Civil society	M
44	Mohammed Hard	NPP	M
45	Hawla Ahmed Mutawkilu	Zongo Women	F
46	Ayishetu Iddrisu	Zongo Women	F
47	Issahaku Fuseini	Zaaddyim	M
48	Issahao Alhassan Iddi	Zaaddyim	M
49	Shahadu Abdul-Majeed	Zaaddyim	M
50	Mohammed A Suaieisu	Zaaddyim	M
51	Fuseimi Alhassam	Sihuyini Youth	M
52	Alhassam Aboui-Karmi	Sihuyini Youth	M
53	Mayo Alhassan	League	M
54	Mohammed Lana Musal	Parliament	M
55	Yakubu Abdallah Iddrisu	NPP	M
56	Issufu Iddrisu Alabira	League	M
57	Adam Bawa Danag	League	M
58	Mohammed Sheriff Tamusah	Sababas Arts Foundation	M
59	Zakaria	PNC	M
60	Bishop R Kassim	RPC	M
61	Sulemana Abdul-Rahim	League	M
62	Mohammed Abdu-Rauf	SYA	M
63	Mohammed Mutala	Kandahar	M
64	Mohammed-H Mubarak	Kandahar	M
65	Albert Yekyang	WANEP-Ghana	M
66	Nuhu Abukari	NPC	M
67	Hassan Ahmed	Invisible Force	M
68	Yakubu Bashiru	Invisible Force	M
69	Karim Abdul-Rafiq	Capialist	M
70	Achana Hannah	RPC	F
71	Mohammed Askanda	RPC	M
Political parties' national offices: 12 June 2017			
72	Hajja Hamdatu Ibrahim	CPP	F
73	Osafo Kwasi Dankan Quarm	CPP	M
74	Anna Sulley Fuuta	CPP	F
75	Johnson Aseidu Nketiah	NDC	M

No.	Name	Organisation	Gender
76	Dr William Ahadzie	NDC	M
77	Hon. Emmanuel S Zumakpeh	NDC	M
78	Kwado Antw-Agyei	NPP	M
79	Kwado Afari	NPP	M
Kumasi: 13 June 2017			
80	Justina Kuntaa	Ashanti Regional Peace Council	F
81	Rev. Amoah Emmanuel Badu	Ashanti Regional Peace Council Regional Executive	M
82	David Agbee	Ghana Institute of Governance and Security	M
83	Lawrence Sarpong	EC, Kumasi	M
84	Lucas Yrryel	EC, Kumasi	M
85	Arthur Wilson	National Commission for Civic Education	M
86	Stephen Dogbe	National Commission for Civic Education	M
87	Doris Agyman	National Commission for Civic Education	F
89	Christina Coleman	National Commission for Civic Education	F
90	Ustaz Ahmed Seidu	Muslim Council, Kumasi	M
91	Apostle Toto Sosu	Love Community Chapel	M
Takoradi: 15 June 2017			
92	Damien Asobayire	Western Regional Peace Council	M
93	Francis Alphonsus Arthur	NCCE, Western Region	M
94	Emmanuel Papa Assan	Youth Authority	M
95	GT Okley	EC	M
96	Nana Y Amua-Sekyi	CHRAJ	F
Donors			
97	Justice Agbezuge	UNDP	M

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