

**A FIVE (5) YEAR STRATEGIC PLAN (2022-2027)
FOR THE
WEST AFRICAN ALCOHOL
POLICY ALLIANCE (WAAPA)**



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The public health objective on alcohol by the World Health Organization (WHO) seeks to reduce the health burden caused by the harmful use of alcohol and, thereby, save lives, reduce alcohol-related disease and prevent injuries resulting from harmful use of alcohol. The hazardous and harmful use of alcohol is a major global contributing factor to death, disease and injury: to the drinker through health impacts such as alcohol dependence, liver cirrhosis, cancers and injuries; and to others through the dangerous actions of intoxicated people, such as road accidents as a result of drunk-driving, violence, especially gender-based violence globally or through the impact of drinking on foetus and child development.

The WHO SAFER priorities are a set of five evidence-based recommended policies and interventions that include “strengthening restrictions on alcohol availability,” “advancing and enforcing drunk-driving counter measures,” “facilitating access to screening, brief interventions, and treatment,” “enforcing bans or comprehensive restrictions on alcohol advertising, sponsorship, and promotion,” and “raising prices on alcohol through excise taxes and pricing policies” (World Health Organization, 2018b). The United Nations Sustainable Development Goals strongly recognize alcohol as a public health burden as provided for in Goal 3.5: “Strengthen, prevention and treatment of substance abuse including narcotics drug abuse and Harmful use of alcohol”. WAAPA, a regional civil society organization from an alliance of national CSOs was formed in the region with the aim of reducing the harm caused by Alcohol consumption, engage the governments in enacting policies, legislations and programmes to protect the public and carry out evidence-based research to raise awareness on alcohol related harm from alcohol consumption. The idea of a regional organization was conceived during the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Africa consultative meeting on the integration of Gender Based Violence and HIV in the National Alcohol Policies in Gaborone Botswana in 2016 and it was actualized in the first quarter of 2017.

To achieve its vision, WAAPA has worked over the period with its members and partners to establish a strategic plan from 2022-2027. The purpose of the strategic plan (2022-2027) is to provide strategic direction for WAAPA for the next five years and guide decision and actions of its Board and Secretariat. The implementation of the Plan is expected to reduce the harmful use of alcohol thereby contributing (directly and indirectly) to the attainment of multiple goals and targets under the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) such as Goal 3.5 “Strengthen the prevention and treatment of substance abuse including narcotics drug abuse and Harmful use of alcohol”. During this period, WAAPA is determined to support alcohol-related harm response across West Africa by focusing on gaps we have identified the areas of Capacity Building, Research, Policy Engagement, Affordable Access, Funding, and accountability in resource usage. We invite all our members, partners and relevant stakeholders to engage positively.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Purpose and Scope of the Strategic Plan

This is a 5-year Strategic Plan prepared for the West African Alcohol Policy Alliance (WAAPA). The purpose of the strategic plan (2022-2027) is to provide strategic direction for WAAPA for the next five years and guide decisions and actions of its Board and Secretariat. The implementation of the Plan is expected to prevent and reduce the harmful use of alcohol thereby contributing (directly and indirectly) to the attainment of multiple goals and targets under the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly Goal 3.5 “Strengthen the prevention and treatment of substance abuse including narcotics drug abuse and Harmful use of alcohol”.

The Strategic Plan covers the following essential areas:

- Profile of WAAPA
- Review of Past Performance
- Environmental Analysis
 - ✓ Internal Analysis
 - ✓ External Analysis
 - ✓ Stakeholder Analysis
 - ✓ Summary of SWOT Analysis
- Key Issues Addressed
- Strategic Options for WAAPA’s Way Forward
- Vision, Mission and Values Statements
- Corporate Objectives
- Strategies
- Strategy Implementation

1.2 Background of the Alcohol Situation

1.2.1 Highlights of Global status on alcohol and health

The public health objective on alcohol by the World Health Organization (WHO) seeks to reduce the health burden caused by the harmful use of alcohol and, thereby, save lives, reduce disease and prevent injuries. The hazardous and harmful use of alcohol is a major global contributing factor to death, disease and injury: to the drinker through health impacts such as alcohol dependence, liver cirrhosis, cancers and injuries; and to others through the dangerous actions of intoxicated people, such as drunk-driving and violence, especially gender-based violence globally or through the impact of drinking on foetus, child protection/safeguarding and child development.

The harmful use of alcohol results in approximately 2.5 million deaths each year, with a net loss of life of 2.25 million, taking into account the estimated beneficial impact of low levels of alcohol use on some diseases in some population groups¹. Alcohol consumption and problems related to alcohol vary widely around the world, but the burden of disease and death remains significant in most countries. Alcohol consumption is the world's third largest risk factor for disease, violence and disability; in middle-income countries, it is the greatest risk. Alcohol is a causal factor in 60 types of diseases and injuries and a component cause in 200 others. Almost 4% of all deaths worldwide are attributed to alcohol, greater than deaths caused by HIV/AIDS, violence or tuberculosis. Alcohol is also associated with many serious social issues, including violence, child neglect and abuse, and absenteeism in the workplace².

Yet, despite all these problems, the harmful use of alcohol remains a low priority in public policy, including in health policy. The harmful use of alcohol is particularly a grave threat to men, it is the leading risk factor for death in males ages 15–59, mainly due to injuries, violence and cardiovascular diseases. Globally, 6.2% of all male deaths are attributable to alcohol, compared to 1.1% of female deaths. Men also have far greater rates of total burden attributed to alcohol than women – 7.4% for men compared to 1.4% for women³.

The world's highest alcohol consumption levels are found in the developed world, including Western and Eastern Europe. High-income countries generally have the highest alcohol consumption. However, it does not follow that high income and high consumption always translate into high alcohol-related problems and high-risk drinking. Western European countries have some of the highest consumption rates but their net alcohol-attributable mortality rates are relatively low, though their alcohol-related disease burden may be high. Many eastern European countries have the highest consumption, risky patterns of drinking and, accordingly, high levels of alcohol-related deaths and disabilities.

However, despite widespread consumption, a higher percentage of people currently do not drink at all. Almost half of all men and two thirds of women have not consumed alcohol in the past year. Abstention rates are low in high-income, high consumption countries, and higher in North African and South Asian countries with large Muslim populations. Female abstention rates are very high in these countries. Abstention from alcohol is very important in the global picture on alcohol consumption; it is one of the strongest predictors of the magnitude of alcohol-attributable burden of disease and injuries in populations. Obviously, lifetime abstention from alcohol means exemption from personal alcohol-attributable disease, injury and death. Because abstention is so prevalent in the world, any diminution in abstention trends could have a big impact on the global burden of disease caused by the harmful use of alcohol.

1 https://earthdash.org/more_info/alcohol.html

2 www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/alcohol

3 [www.thelancet.com/journals/lanpsy/article/PIIS2215-0366\(18\)30337-7/fulltext](http://www.thelancet.com/journals/lanpsy/article/PIIS2215-0366(18)30337-7/fulltext)

The WHO SAFER priorities are a set of five evidence-based recommended policies and interventions that include “strengthening restrictions on alcohol availability,” “advancing and enforcing drunk driving counter measures,” “facilitating access to screening, brief interventions, and treatment,” “enforcing bans or comprehensive restrictions on alcohol advertising, sponsorship, and promotion,” and “raising prices on alcohol through excise taxes and pricing policies” (World Health Organization, 2018b).

Harmful alcohol consumption is risky both for the drinker and for other people. An intoxicated person can put people in harm’s way by involving them in traffic accidents or violent behaviour, or by negatively affecting co-workers, relatives, friends or strangers. Contrary to the belief of many people, the health, safety and socioeconomic problems attributable to alcohol can be effectively reduced. Many evidence-based alcohol policies and prevention programmes are shown to work. One of the most effective is raising alcohol prices by levying higher taxes on local alcoholic beverages and importation and sales.

1.2.2 Regional and Sub-Regional Situational Analysis

Drinkers in African countries consume 13% more alcohol per capita than the average among drinkers globally (WHO, 2014a), and per unit of alcohol consumed, people living in under-resourced countries experience a greater burden of disease compared with those in higher income countries (Rehm et al., 2009). According to the World Health Organization (WHO), although a large proportion of the African population abstains from alcohol (58%), alcohol consumption among African adults, aged 15 and older, is projected to increase throughout the next decade (WHO, 2014a). However, alcohol is already a leading risk factor for death and disability in sub-Saharan Africa (Lim et al., 2012). The changing alcohol environment in Africa suggests the need for stronger alcohol control policies to reduce alcohol-related harm among drinkers, as well as to protect those who abstain from alcohol.

Numerous alcohol control policy options have been found to reduce alcohol consumption and related health and social problems (Room et al., 2005; Anderson et al., 2009a; Babor et al., 2010). Evidence-based policy options include regulating alcohol's availability (e.g. reducing outlet density, and decreasing days and hours of sales), reducing alcohol's affordability (e.g. increasing the price through taxation), restrictions on local alcohol production and marketing (local and imported beverages), and drunk-driving counter measures could help to reduce alcohol consumption in West Africa in particular and Africa at large. Most of the countries in the West African region do not have a national policy framework to address harmful alcohol consumption, although a few do (World Health Organization, 2018a). It also seems to be the case that in countries with policies, there is insufficient enforcement Morojele et al. (2021) and limited focus on setting research priorities

(Balenger et al., 2021). It is within this context of limited formal infrastructure that partners look to community-based organizations (CBOs) and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in the sub-region to lead the advocacy against alcohol-related harm.

However, there is a scarcity of research on CBOs and NGOs who address alcohol-related harm in West Africa or in other parts of the continent, to determine their capacity and perceived readiness for prevention. This is a particularly dire situation across Sub-Saharan Africa as the overall alcohol burden remains high and because the region is targeted for market expansion of alcohol products (Morojele et al., 2021).

1.0 THE STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS

A participatory process with strong emphasis on consensus building was adopted as the main approach for developing the strategic plan. The process required the participation of staff at the WAAPA Secretariat and its partners. This was meant to create a sense of ownership of the process and commitment for effective implementation of the plan. Various documents on WAAPA's operations and other Alcohol related literature were reviewed. The documents included:

- Global Alcohol Action Plan (2022-2030)
- Global Status Report
- WAAPA Constitution
- WAAPA Interim Operational and Governance Policies
- WAAPA Technical Paper
- Research publication by a partner of WAAPA titled “A readiness assessment for the prevention of alcohol-related harm in West Africa: A new methodological approach to inform practice and policy”

In order to solicit data/inputs into the preparation of the strategic plan, a number of meetings and consultations were held with the WAAPA Secretariat, comprising the following:

- A meeting was held with Secretariat staff to officially inform them about the strategic planning process, explain the benefits, respond to any questions or concerns they might have and solicit their total support and commitment. It was also meant to ‘kill’ the grapevine.
- A 2-hour focus group brainstorming session was held with the Executive Secretary and his team. The session generated a lot of useful ideas on the strategic planning process that served as data for the strategic plan
- An Interview Guide was sent to WAAPA Partners to solicit ideas that could feed into WAAPA's Strategic Plan.
- WAAPA Alcohol Policy Forum held in March 2022 (Virtual)

The main objective of the interaction was to reflect on the past and generate ideas which would serve as inputs into the strategic plan. The interaction methodology consisted of introductory presentations on the strategic planning process, discussions, brainstorming, group work and presentation of group outputs at plenary sessions. The output of the interactions for the WAAPA Secretariat and responses from the Interview guide received, was analyzed on the basis of content or themes. This eventually formed the base material for the development of the strategic plan.

The consultations with the other stakeholders and internet search for best practices helped in refining the base material into a zero draft strategic document. The zero draft strategic plan was subjected to in-house review. Thereafter a stakeholders' workshop was held to validate the revised document.

The feedback from the stakeholders' validation workshop culminated in the preparation of a draft strategic plan, which was further reviewed by WAAPA Secretariat. The result is this five-year Strategic Plan. The planning process was facilitated by Consultant (Equals Management Services Limited), supported by WAAPA Secretariat.

2.1 West African Alcohol Policy Alliance (WAAPA)

There are several studies linking Alcohol to the emergence of Non communicable diseases. There is an ever-enlarging market in West Africa which has birthed lots of Alcohol industries in the region targeting the young people. There is a growing market for Alcoholic drinks hence the aggressive marketing strategy employed by the Alcohol industry. The United Nations Sustainable Development Goals strongly recognize alcohol as a public health burden. Goal 3.5: "Strengthen the prevention and treatment of substance abuse including narcotics drug abuse and Harmful use of alcohol". Despite recommendations by World Health Organization's Regional Office for Africa urging parties to "Develop and implement alcohol control policies. Alcohol control policies and legislation and regulations should be based on clear public health goals and best available evidence" The policies require strong leadership and commitment (at both national and local levels) and are necessary to ensure transparency, continuity and sustainability of the measures adopted by the relevant partners.". Government unwillingness to regulate the activities of these industries together with the cultural practices in West Africa has led to a surge in the number of people who engage in harmful alcohol consumption and its consequences.

Consequently, national civil society organizations have been formed in the region with the aim of reducing the harm caused by Alcohol consumption, engage the governments in enacting policies, legislations and programmes to protect the public and carry out evidence-based research to raise awareness of harmful alcohol consumption. The idea of a regional organization was conceived during the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Africa consultative meeting on the integration of Gender Based Violence and HIV in the National Alcohol Policies in Gaborone Botswana in 2016 and it was actualized in the first quarter of 2017. At the sideline of the consultative meeting, CSOs from Ghana represented by Issah Ali and Nigeria represented by Dr Umenze Franklin Chukwuma together with the representatives of the IOGT International (IOG International by then but now called MOVENDI), namely; Kristina Sperkova; President and Brenda Mkwesha; Board member discussed the potential risk of the expansion of the alcohol industry in West Africa and measures to monitor, coordinate actions and counter the activities of the alcohol industry. Founding organizations are the Centre for Research and Information on Substance Abuse (CRISA), Nigeria Alcohol Prevention and Youth Initiative (NAPYI), Institute of Leadership and Development (INSLA) and Vision for Alternative Development (VALD). Foundation for Rural and Urban Transformation (FoRUT), Reseau Jeunesse Population Developpement du Senegal (RESOPOPDEV), Action Network for Sustainable Development (ANSO), IOGT Gambia and IOGT Guinea-Bissau and a Liberian CSO.

Our Vision

The Vision of WAAPA is to create healthy nations free from Alcohol related harm and an empowered population.

Our Mission

The mission of WAAPA is to create coordinating, sharing and supportive platform for NGOs and development professionals working on alcohol related harm to influence governance and evidence-based alcohol policy development and implementation in West Africa and beyond.

Our Core Values

The core values of WAAPA are founded on principles of health, economic prosperity and empowerment which resonate with the Alliance vision, as stated below:

Public Health - WAAPA will work towards the achievement and promotion of effective public health policies in the designing of regulations, programmes and in the allocation of resources.

Collective Action - WAAPA will be, guided by its mission and vision, strive to promote joint co-operation and or collaboration with like-minded organization in the attainment of its set goals and objectives.

Accountability - WAAPA will hold itself and its members accountable to the highest level of ethical behaviour and responsibility for its actions, while maintaining integrity in its performance. WAAPA shall at all times uphold to its members, beneficiaries and partners, with respect to its processed, operations, actions and outcomes.

Autonomy - WAAPA shall be an independent, non-political and no-denomination organisation which does not in any manner associated itself with the alcohol industry. WAAPA will work towards the achievement of sustainability.

Gender and diversity - WAAPA recognizes diverse impacts and experiences of people of all genders in relation to alcohol harm and therefore, promote gender equality and diversity

Development: WAAPA will systematically use scientific and technical knowledge to promote economic and social transformation that is based on communities being free of alcohol related harm.

2.3 The Mandate and Objectives of WAAPA

The Alliance interventions are executed through the following mandate and objectives.

MANDATE:

- To undertake activities to achieve WAAPA's objectives.
- To raise funds to facilitate WAAPA's activities and support member networks.
- To network with organizations and development professionals in the region and beyond, so as to influence policies and strategies in the field of Alcohol.
- To promote alcohol advocacy activities in the West African Region.
- To employ staff for the Secretariat and for specific programme and projects.

OBJECTIVES:

- To promote and facilitate information sharing on alcohol and alcohol related issues;
- To initiate, facilitate and conduct research on alcohol and alcohol policies and programmes;
- To strengthen the capacities of civil society organizations and development professionals involved in alcohol policies and programmes;
- To encourage, support and strengthen partnerships between member organizations and governments on the implementation of alcohol policies and programmes;
- To promote and advocate for national, regional and continental policies, programmes and regulatory frameworks on alcohol and alcohol related issues;
- To mobilize and facilitate access to financial, human and technical assistance and resources required for the development, implementation and evaluation of alcohol policies and programmes.

3.0 REVIEW OF PAST PERFORMANCE

The review of WAAPA's past performance covers the period 2018-2021. The main document crafted to guide WAAPA's decisions and activities during the period is the constitution and its operational document put together over the period.

3.1 Review of 2018-2021 Performance

The WAAPA operational and Governance document identified key issues to operationalize the objectives of WAAPA and strategies to be implemented to achieve the goals upon its formation. Unfortunately, no strategic plan existed with specific targets set to measure performance. It did not therefore provide a yardstick, standard or criteria against which organizational, functional or individual performance could be measured. The general understanding was that WAAPA is still in the budding stages of its operations with a lot of millage to cover with respect to advocacy on Alcohol policy development by West African governments and policy implementers. An alliance of this nature since its formation have also achieved some remarkable

- Policy framework to engage stakeholders Internationally- The strategy was to involve stakeholders in developing a regional policy for civil society organizations to combine efforts to advocate for government to intervene with policy on promotion of alcohol and other interventions for implementation. Some progress has been made in Ghana with a policy on promotion of alcoholic products on national television which is a case study for other members in the alliance to work with.
- Modern Management of WAAPA-The strategy was to get the WAAPA structure in place with Board of Directors and Secretariat to develop and implement operational and governance policy manual as well as personnel policy manual and establish regular interactions with stakeholders. The operational and governance policy manuals were developed and in use by the Secretariat.
- Set-up and establishment of 8 (eight) National Alcohol Policy Alliances (NAPAs) in West Africa.
- Secured legal and official recognition of 7 (seven) NAPAs in the various countries in West Africa.
- Provided standard or basic administrative logistics (PC, Laptop, Printer & internet facility) to three (3) NAPAs.

- Supported the development and review of four (4) Draft National Alcohol Policies (NAP) and one (1) Draft Alcohol Regulations (Legislations).
- Participated in international events on Alcohol, non-communicable diseases and related issues including WHO Regional Committee Meetings, World Bank Group annual meetings, Global Alcohol Policy Conference, Forum on Alcohol, Drugs and Addictive Behaviour (FADAB), etc.
- Participated on Regional joint campaigns with EAAPA, SAAPA, GAPA, etc.

4.0 ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS

As part of the strategic planning process, an in-depth environmental scanning, comprising internal, external and stakeholder analysis was carried out to determine the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats of WAAPA as well as the extent to which the organization was meeting the expectations of stakeholders. This exercise culminated in the derivation of key issues that needed to be addressed in the plan period.

4.1 Internal Analysis

The strategic factors within the Alliance, which are crucial for strategy formulation, have been identified as the strengths and weaknesses.

4.1.1 Strengths

The following strengths of WAAPA have been identified:

- **A regional Alliance of national alliances with clear mandate for promoting public health with respect to Alcohol consumption and its effects.**

The Constitution of WAAPA provides clear mandate for shaping policy in West Africa through research and advocacy to minimise the impact of alcohol consumption and its effects.

- **Capacity to develop alcohol policies and legislations**

WAAPA has developed and reviewed four (4) Draft National Alcohol Policies (NAP) and one (1) Draft Alcohol Regulations (Legislations)

- **Cadre of Trained Professionals**

WAAPA has a strong cadre of trained professional across the region with knowledge and research in Alcohol policy and control. What is required now, among others, is harnessing the talents and efforts of these trained staff and challenging them to deliver.

- **Commitment to Continuing Capacity development of Staff**

WAAPA has a strong propensity for staff development. Over the years, capacity development has been improved by given opportunities to upgrade their knowledge in the area through conferences.

- **Access to Expertise to help Transform the Alliance**

WAAPA has partners across the globe such as FORUT etc. and other researchers available to support research and policy development in the alcohol sector to minimize the impact of alcohol on the regional population.

4.1.2 Weaknesses

In the course of environmental scanning, some critical weaknesses in the internal environment were identified. The weaknesses of WAAPA have been analyzed as follows:

- Weak Financial Base

Low Budget Support

Budget support for the operations of WAAPA has been low to meet their planned activities to upscale some of their interventions. The Alliance members have little resources at their disposal to run their activities at the country and regional levels with few sponsors. There is lack of support from partners which represents funds/grants provided by development partners/donors. The support forms a very little proportion of WAAPA's annual total budget. The focus of partners is mainly towards some identified areas which affect their operations. Presently, no serious attention is given to partnership support as a strategy for mobilizing funds for operations. Here also, no targets are set.

Weak Internal Structures

As a budding Alliance, internal structures are still young and the levels of strength among national CSOs with interest in Alcohol issues are weak which affects their effective organization to champion the agenda at the national and regional levels.

- **Low visibility**

There is inadequate marketing of the WAAPA's activities, and hence its low visibility. The website is not working well. Currently, some brochures, flyers, or newsletters have been produced on WAAPA programs but not enough to create attention and support for the Alliance.

- **Inadequate space to carry out core functions; No permanent facilities**

Since its establishment, WAAPA has operated from facilities with little space for carrying out activities and spaces for Administrative staff to function effectively.

4.2 External Analysis

An external environmental analysis was carried out to assess changes and trends in the world (global, continental, regional, national) that are likely to have significant impacts on WAAPA over the next 5 years and highlight the opportunities and threats. The factors considered in the analysis included: Economic, Socio-cultural, Political/Legislative, Technological, Ecological, Competitive, and Philanthropic trends.

4.2.1 Opportunities

The opportunities identified include:

- **Modest gains in governance, sustainable economic opportunity and safety and the rule of law**
Over the past years, there have been modest gains in democratic governance, sustainable economic opportunity for the people, safety and the rule of law in the sub-region. Government's goal with respect to governance and rule of law is to work in partnership with all citizens to build and operate effective institutions and systems that will strengthen peace, promote and uphold democratic governance, accountability and justice for all. The stable political climate in the region coupled with significant progress in economic and human development promotes the work of CSOs (WAAPA members) national and international institutions.
- **Need/demand for research on Alcohol to convince policy makers**
There is need and demand for capacity building in alcohol research and policy development and development of the research agenda to convince policy makers with empirical data to support policy from civil society organizations.
- **Multilateral & Bilateral Partnership Support**
Notwithstanding general decline in donor support, there is still considerable goodwill towards public health research and policy. Many agencies and countries continue to provide both financial support and technical assistance towards the research and capacity building for CSOs who hold government to its responsibilities on alcohol issues through taxes and others policies. WAAPA will position itself adequately to take advantage of this support while it's available.

4.2.2 Threats

The specific threats confronting WAAPA include the following:

- **Competition from other CSOs on Non-Communicable Diseases**
Competition and poor coordination from other NCD dominated alliances may present a porous front to governments and funders as interest-based advocacy creeps in other than issues based which promotes a reduction in alcohol intake
- **Dwindling Donor funding and Change in Donors' focus**
There is no doubt that donor funds flowing to developing countries including the West Africa region have reduced considerably for nearly a decade. Large amounts of available funds are directed to areas of economic/political interests and the COVID-19 pandemic have affected donor finances also. In addition, donor/funding agencies have their own interests which fall in line with their own mandates.

- **Response from Alcohol producing companies**

WAAPA's Advocacy to Government can be affected by strong resolve by wealthy alcohol producing companies and importers that are prepared to buy government officials and convince them of creating unemployment and revenue loss situations to avoid tough policies from government on advocacy. They are strong and normally rely on celebrities to cause disaffections for governments which affect governments' resolve to respond to protect alcohol abuse.

- **Low political commitment from national Government**

Protracted processes for policy and legal control measures, and little or no resources dedicated to implement and enforce them.

4.3 WAAPA Stakeholders' Analysis

An analysis of WAAPA's Stakeholders was conducted. The analysis identified the main stakeholders, their expectations or concerns and assessed the extent to which the expectations were being fulfilled. A summary of the results of the analysis is provided in Table 1 below:

Table 1: WAAPA Stakeholder Analysis

No.	Stakeholder	Needs, Perception, Expectations	Extent of meeting Expectation	Measures to meet expectation	Rank
1	General Assembly	Deliver on mandate through capacity building, research, and dissemination of findings on alcohol; influence policy and Good corporate governance.	Minimum / Low	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Put in place appropriate organizational structure & Governing Board. 2. Have a responsive secretariat with qualify personnel. 3. Identify additional sources of funding to augment present budgetary support. 4. Improve on quality and relevance of activities 	1
2	Development Partners {WHO FORUT in Norway, etc.]	Improve the quality of programs and internal processes based on best practices. Submit reports timely. Account for support received. Prudent use of funds	Minimum/ Low	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Improve on our operational processes (clear processes, procedures and job descriptions) 2. Improve on the financial management and internal control / internal audit systems. 	4

No.	Stakeholder	Needs, Perception, Expectations	Extent of meeting Expectation	Measures to meet expectation	Rank
3	WAAPA national partners	Capacity enhancement for quality service delivery; Relevant and quality programs; More visibility	Minimum/ Low	Improve the quality and relevance of our programs and visibility	2
4	Board of Directors	Effective & efficient management; Financial sustainability; Good corporate image	Minimum/ Low	Provide policy direction; Governance structure in place.	5
5	WAAPA Secretariat Staff	Job security; Good remuneration; Opportunity for advancement. Availability of working tools	Minimum/ Low	Motivation through attractive remuneration/benefits, staff development, Commitment and professionalism; Provide working tools	3
6	Professional network of Alcohol researchers	Maintain active collaboration and relationships.	Minimum	Make WAAPA status current with West African Health Organization, Global Alcohol Policy Alliance (GAPA) etc.	6

4.5 Strategic Issues to Address

Arising out of the SWOT and Stakeholder analysis, the under-mentioned key issues were derived. These key issues indicate where WAAPA leadership needs to focus its strategic attention. The key issues are as follows:

- i. Weak financial base
- ii. Develop capacity of national alliances to be relevant in the sub-regional and national discourses on alcohol issues
- iii. Low visibility
- iv. Lack of policy engagement with development partners, governments and African governmental bodies
- v. Inadequate infrastructure to support national institutions and WAAPA activities
- vi. Weak relations with stakeholders

5.0 STRATEGIC OPTIONS: WAY FORWARD

There are some strategic choices that WAAPA has to make to guide its future operations. A number of scenarios were created for consideration and choice. The choice, to a large extent, would determine the future direction of WAAPA and what it would become within the next five years. Six strategic options are developed and their descriptions, including the merits and demerits of each are as follows:

Table 2: STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

CODE	STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES
SO1	To strengthen the capacity of WAAPA membership to be relevant in the sub-regional and national discourses on Alcohol issues in their respective countries
SO2	To ensure professional network of Alcohol relevant evidence-based research and reporting on Alcohol policy in West Africa
SO3	To ensure high visibility on policy engagement with development partners and West African governments
SO4	To increase universal, equitable and affordable access to rehabilitation of people with prolonged alcohol issues
SO5	To source adequate funding for WAAPA activities
SO6	To ensure accountability in resource mobilization, management and reporting
SO7	To mainstream mental health in alcohol harm reduction strategies
SO8	Expand WAAPA's Geographical scope in reducing harm from alcohol

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

5.1 WAAPA STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS FOR 2022 – 2027

The specific strategies and key actions that will be implemented to achieve the objectives set are provided below:

SO1: To strengthen the capacity of WAAPA membership to be relevant in the sub- regional and national discourses on Alcohol issues in their respective countries

Initiatives/Activities:

- Review WAAPA constitution in order to strengthen its corporate governance in line with its structure and operations.

- Formulate policy on WAAPA Secretariat and Alliance members staff training and development to guide WAAPA decisions and avoid adhoc decisions on capacity development
- Conduct Training Needs Assessment (TNA) of members of the Alliance.
- Design and facilitate or support staff training programs (including skill- oriented courses, seminars, conferences, study tours, understudy, mentoring coaching and certificated courses).
- Reposition WAAPA to be a go-to-place for alcohol policy in Africa by building capacity of its National Alliances as well as its Secreariat staff.
- Support the leadership of NAPAs and coordinators at the Secretariat and connect with policy makers to enable scale-up research-led policies on Alcohol issues.
- Build capacity and provide support to weak Alcohol related CSOs in the sub-region and national Alliances to promote country-level and sub-regional level advocacies in terms of information sharing, transmission of skills, expertise, knowledge and training workshops towards achieving the mission of WAAPA.

SO2: To ensure professional network of Alcohol relevance and evidence-based research, and reporting and advocacies on Alcohol policies in West Africa

Initiatives/Activities:

- Create a network of researchers with relevant research faculties, Research Centers, and connect them with practitioners to scale-up research that brings real-West African solutions on alcohol challenges
- Support partnership with researchers across the World to generate alcohol related data, research, evidence and actions towards influencing policies.
- Encourage West Africa generated innovations and policies on alcohol related research to close the gap between WAAPA, African Regional Institutions, governments and university-funded research.

SO3: To ensure high visibility on policy engagement with development partners and West African governments

Initiatives/Activities:

- Conduct stakeholders' surveys to target for visibility (including private sector, CSOs, etc)
- Compile comprehensive directory of key stakeholders.
- Organize periodic visits to stakeholders to engage on alcohol policy
- Conduct annual stakeholder forum and sustain relations
- Collaborate, directly and indirectly, with governments and other regional-level stakeholders to influence policy priorities on alcohol as a development objective.

- Develop a range of platforms, systems and tools to ensure that useful information on alcohol harm is made available to the right people at the right time, including on social media.

SO4: To increase universal, equitable and affordable access to rehabilitation of people with prolonged alcohol disorders and issues

Initiatives/Activities:

- Collaborate with West African governments and other regional-level stakeholders to influence policies that promote and increase universal, equitable and affordable access to rehabilitation of people with prolonged alcohol disorders and issues.
- Support the coordination effort of CSOs through external and internal funding to complement government effort.
- Champion and advocate for the adoption and funding of rehabilitation of people with prolonged alcohol issues by National Health Insurance policies in member countries.
- Lobby the introduction of free screening and treatment of NCDs to create affordable access and reduce NCD morbidity and mortality among people with prolonged health conditions of alcohol issues.
- Placing more emphasis on proximity of care to minimize the burden on rural dwellers.

SO5: To promote adequate funding for WAAPA activities

To increase funding, WAAPA will solicit partner support to:

- Market WAAPA to create a new image in the CSO space
- Showcase WAAPA's strategic plan that aligns with WAAPA's goal
- Research areas of focus and priorities of partners/donors
- Write project proposals (e.g. training, research, etc) for grants
- Plan and implement agreed projects
- Hold/conduct partners for a WAAPA will comply with guidelines on use of partner fund, including the submission of annual reports, and to follow up for grants.

SO6: To ensure accountability in resource mobilization, management/and reporting

Initiatives/Activities:

- Follow up on spending of funds for activities based on approved operational documents
- Appoint external Auditors to audit WAAPA accounts yearly
- Share audit reports with partners and funders
-

- Submit well-written project reports with milestones and success stories to partners and funders
- Follow up for approval through the processes of networking, lobbying and negotiations.
- Assess Secretariat and Board performance compliance annually.
- Update/review WAAPA's anti-corruption policy.
- Support NAPAs to have functional anti-corruption policies.

SO7: To mainstream mental health in alcohol harm reduction strategies

Initiatives / activities

- To conduct capacity need assessment of members on the use of tools for community-based interventions on mental health and alcohol harm reduction
- To coordinate CSOs for effective Mental Health and Alcohol Policy Advocacy
- To Mobilize NAPAs for effective monitoring of the implementation of mental health policies / legislations

SO8: Expand WAAPA's Geographical scope in reducing harm from alcohol

Initiatives / activities

- To establish NAPA in other West African Countries
- To provide technical and or financial support to all NAPAs in West Africa in reducing harm from alcohol

6.0 IMPLEMENTATION, MONITORING AND EVALUATION

WAAPA recognizes that strategy implementation is as important as strategy formulation. In this regard, WAAPA, through its Secretariat, will undertake appropriate actions, as indicated below, to ensure successful implementation of the selected institutional strategies.

WAAPA is focusing on six complementary strategic directions to maximize the impact of its actions. Annually, WAAPA needs to prepare the minimum effort planned for each year, and depending on financing, activate the achievement of objectives based on more detailed plans that align with the proposed activities and expected outcomes as followed:

6.1 Key Performance Measures, Targets, and Implementation

To ensure that those responsible for the WAAPA's strategy can manage its implementation and control its execution, key indicators have been defined to be used to evaluate implementation results. These performance measures describe the strategic intentions of the WAAPA regarding qualitative and quantitative targets. By focusing on achieving these targets, the Board and the WAAPA Secretariat would be able to measure progress towards the strategic objectives. For top performance, WAAPA has defined both financial and non-financial matrixes (including target values) for its strategy. By selecting measures that reflect the objectives of the strategy, it gives a clear indication of progress towards strategic goals. It thus makes strategy operational by converting it into a set of performance measures and targets.

6.2 Implementation

The implementation of WAAPA Strategic Plan activities will rely on existing structures created by the constitution. Cooperation amongst Alcohol Policy Alliance members in West Africa will take place throughout the network using its internal policies and procedures as well as by-laws. Various CSOs and national alliances, working together with the Board and the Secretariat will undertake several activities to achieve a given objective. The Secretariat will take charge and coordinate resources as far as feasible and necessary.

Annual Implementation Plans (IPs) or work plans will be developed based on the Action Plan of the Secretariat and Alliance members in West Africa taking into consideration the six goals set and respective activities to be initiated. These plans would be developed in a manner that pursues the KPIs set for the period. Physical targets will be set quarterly for each objective in line with resource availability. The Annual Implementation Plans shall also be based on available funding for the projected work. Hence, it is incumbent on the WAAPA Board to ensure adequate funding for its tasks.

Table 3: Strategic Objectives, TimeLine and Implementation Matrix

#	Strategic Objectives/Activities	Timeline					KPIs	Responsibility	Partners
		2022	2023	2024	2025	2026			
1	<p>SO1: To develop capacity of WAAPA Alliances to be relevant in the sub-regional and national discourse on Alcohol issues</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tailored efforts towards the development of the establishment of an institutional structure for a functional WAAPA Secretariat, WAAPA General Assembly and its Board. Support National Offices with infrastructure, equipment, and tools to work. Develop materials that will be directed towards implementing the African action plan for achieving SDG goal 3.4 Support human and institutional capacity development efforts for effective WAAPA Action Plan for achieving SDG goal 3.4 Provide, secure and easy to use IT infrastructure and 						<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number and level of operational efficiency of WAAPA National Alliances functional and active. Number of efficient personnel employed to manage the National offices. Quantity and number of equipment and tools provided to support national offices. Number of Alcohol burden related information developed and shared among WAAPA alliances towards coordinated activities. Number of capacity building events organized or participated in to support the implementation of West African Action Plan for achieving SDG goal 3.4 	<p>Board, Executive Secretary assisted by the Secretariat</p> <p>Executive Secretary</p> <p>Executive Secretary, Advocacy & policy Officer, Research & Innovation Officer</p> <p>Executive Secretary, Advocacy & policy Officer</p>	<p>Development Partners and Donor agencies</p> <p>CSO with similar orientation</p> <p>Government Agencies responsible for Alcohol issues</p>

	<p>services to allow the secure management and sharing of information across WAAPA membership.</p>										<p>WAAPA Secretariat</p>	
1	<p>SO2: To ensure professional network of Alcohol relevant evidence-based research and reporting on Alcohol policy in West Africa</p> <p>The following activities would be carried out:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create a network with relevant research faculties, Research Centers, and Researchers and connect with practitioners to scale-up research that brings real-West African solutions on alcohol challenges • Support partnership with researchers across the World to generate alcohol related data, research and evidence action towards influencing policy. • Encourage West African generated innovations and policies on alcohol related research to 							<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of efficient personnel employed to manage the R&I Directorate. • Quality and number of regional and international researchers linked to carry out Alcohol research in West Africa. • Number and type of support provided to researchers towards compliant with regulatory requirements to share research output. • Number of IT platforms created to allow for secure management and sharing of research information. • Number of 	<p>Executive Secretary, Research Officer</p> <p>Research Officer</p> <p>Research Officer</p> <p>Executive Secretary, Research Officer</p>	<p>Development Partners International Non Government Organisations</p> <p>National level statistical and research agencies</p> <p>State agencies (e.g. Ministry responsible for Finance, Ministry of Health etc.)</p>		

	<p>close the gap between WAAPA, African Regional Institutions, governments and university-funded research.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support researchers to be compliant with regulatory requirements to preserve and share research outputs. Provide secure and easy to use IT infrastructure and services to allow the secure management and sharing of research information. 			<p>technical collaborations with other research institutions established</p>	<p>Executive Secretary, Research Officer</p>
SO3: To ensure high visibility on policy engagement with development partners and West African governments					
	<p>The following activities would be carried out:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conduct stakeholders' survey to target for visibility (including private sector, CSOs, etc) Compile comprehensive directory of key stakeholders. Organize periodic 			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Availability of survey report on visibility targeting. Availability of comprehensive directory of stakeholders. Number of visits undertaken to stakeholders. Number of collaborations engaged in with 	<p>Executive Secretary & Advocacy & Policy Officer</p> <p>Communication Officer, National Focal Persons, CSOs</p> <p>Communication</p>
					<p>Development partners.</p> <p>The Legislature</p> <p>People Living with Alcohol related challenges,</p> <p>Civil Society organisations</p> <p>Alcohol producing companies</p> <p>Pharmaceutical</p>

<p>visits to stakeholders to engage on alcohol policy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct annual stakeholder forum and sustain relations • Collaborate, directly and indirectly, with governments and other regional level stakeholders to influence policy priorities or the design of policy. • Develop a range of platforms and tools to ensure that useful information on alcohol is made available to the right people at the right time. 		<p>stakeholders to influence policy on alcohol</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number and quality of platforms and tools developed for information dissemination. • Ability to advocate for the promulgation of laws ensuring the economic and social rights of people living with Alcohol induce diseases. • Ability to develop a number of guidelines towards the standardization of laws in West Africa. • Number of frameworks, policy and procedure manuals developed towards ensuring the rights of people living with Alcohol / NCDs. • Quality level of WAAPA's advocacy platforms for sensitization on their rights – social media, websites. • Quality of publicity and advocacy 	<p>Units</p> <p>Executive Secretary</p> <p>Executive Secretary, Advocacy & Policy Officer</p> <p>Executive Secretary, Advocacy & policy</p>	<p>Companies</p> <p>State agencies (e.g, Ministry of Health, Human rights etc.)</p> <p>State agencies (e.g, Ministry responsible for Finance, Ministry of Health etc.)</p> <p>Regional and sub-regional bodies (e.g,AU, ECOWAS etc)</p>
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										materials developed and used.		
										<ul style="list-style-type: none"> West African Report on the Meaningful Involvement of People living with Alcohol/NCDs in prevention and control 		
SO4: To increase universal, equitable and affordable access to rehabilitation of people with prolonged alcohol issues												
										<p>The following activities would be carried out:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collaborate with West African governments and other regional level stakeholders to influence policy that promote and increase universal, equitable and affordable access to rehabilitation of people with prolonged alcohol issues. Support the coordination effort of CSOs through external and internal funding to complement government effort. Champion and advocate for the adoption and funding of rehabilitation of 		
										<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of Alcohol screenings conducted by WAAPA members in conjunction with National governments annually Number of sensitization programmes held for National governments on Alcohol induce health challenges 	<p>Advocacy & Policy Officer, Sub-regional Focal Person</p> <p>Advocacy & Policy Officer, National Focal Person</p> <p>Advocacy & Policy Officer, National Focal Person</p> <p>Advocacy & Policy Officer,</p>	<p>Development Partners (DPs) Donor Agencies</p> <p>Government agencies responsible for Health. Food and Drugs certification and Standardization agencies</p>

<p>people with prolonged alcohol issues by National Health Insurance policies in member countries.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourage the introduction of free screening and treatment of NCDs to create affordable access and reduce NCD morbidity and mortality among people with prolonged alcohol issues. Emphasis on proximity of care to minimize the burden on rural dwellers. 	<hr/> <hr/>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inclusion of alcohol related diseases and care on free health care by West African Governments. Number of funding received by WAAPA members towards the support for the treatment of Alcohol related diseases. 	<p>Sub-regional Focal Person</p> <p>Communication Officer, Sub-regional Focal Persons, Funding & Communication Units of sub-regionals</p>	
<p>SO5: To promote adequate funding for WAAPA activities</p>				
<p>The following activities would be carried out:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Market WAAPA to create a new image in the CSO space Showcase 	<hr/>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Amounts of national government budgets available for improved Alcohol programs. Number of developing partners 	<p>Executive Director, Grants and Funding Coordinator, Sub-regional Focal Persons/funding</p>	<p>Training Consultants, Organizational Development Consultants, Global NCD</p>

<p>WAAPA’s strategic plan that align with WAAPA’s goals</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify research areas of focus and prioritize for partners/donors • Write project proposals (e.g. training, research, etc) for grants • Follow up for grants • Plan and implement agreed projects • Submit annual reports • Hold/conduct partners’ fora • Comply with guidelines on use of partner funds 	<p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p>	<p>supporting the Alliance.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of proposals developed and submitted to funders for funding WAAPA activities. • Number of resources available to WAAPA to monitor and implement projects on Alcohol. • Increase funding by participatory private and public sector institutions on Alcohol. • Number of funded research projects carried out. • Number of funding sources identified and accessed. • Number of annual reports submitted 	<p>and communication units</p> <p>Executive Secretary, Grants and Funding Coordinator</p> <p>Executive Secretary, Grants and Funding Coordinator</p> <p>Executive Secretary, Grants and Funding Coordinator, Research & Innovations Officer</p>	<p>FORUT</p> <p>Civil Society Government Agency responsible for Finance</p>
<i>SO6: To ensure accountability in resource usage and reporting</i>				
<p>The following activities would be carried out:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engage the WAAPA Secretariat to follow up on spending of funds for activities based on approved operational documents 	<p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of operational guidelines develop in financial management • Number and quality of reports developed on strategic plan 	<p>Executive Secretary, Advocacy and Policy Officer, Sub-regional Focal Persons</p> <p>Executive Secretary,</p>	<p>Funding agencies Identified Federations and CSOs.</p> <p>People Living with Alcohol induced challenges,</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appoint external Auditors to audit WAAPA accounts yearly • Share audit reports with partners and funders • Submit well-written project reports with milestones to partners and funders • Follow up for approval through the processes of networking, lobbying and negotiations. • Assess Secretariat and Board performance compliance annually. 									<p>achievement, policies and procedures.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Time release of Audit reports for the attention of partners • Number and quality of project reports submitted to funders 	<p>Advocacy & Policy Officer, National Focal Persons</p> <p>Executive Secretary, Advocacy & Policy Officer, National Focal Persons</p> <p>Executive Secretary, Advocacy & Policy Officer, National Focal Persons</p> <p>Board of Directors, Executive Secretary</p>	<p>Civil Society</p> <p>Traditional and Religious bodies.</p> <p>Other identified duty bearers.</p>
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7.0 MANAGEMENT OF STRATEGIC PLAN

7.1 Analysis of Human and Institutional Capacity Needs

WAAPA has a Secretariat run virtually by dedicated staff appointed by the Alliance members who undertake the day-to-day running of activities. The current staff strength is Adhoc with a number of 3 helping to put the WAAPA Secretariat together. Our proposed organisational structure has 7 staff for both the Secretariat and the Grants and Funding Office where vacant positions have to be filled. An analysis of the human capacity analysis shows that most of WAAPA current staffs are focused on doing almost everything without clear pathways that can be measured and probably the case because WAAPA does not make the necessary financial commitment to engage them full time. This strategic plan will avert that situation by engaging permanent staff for the running of WAAPA secretariat.

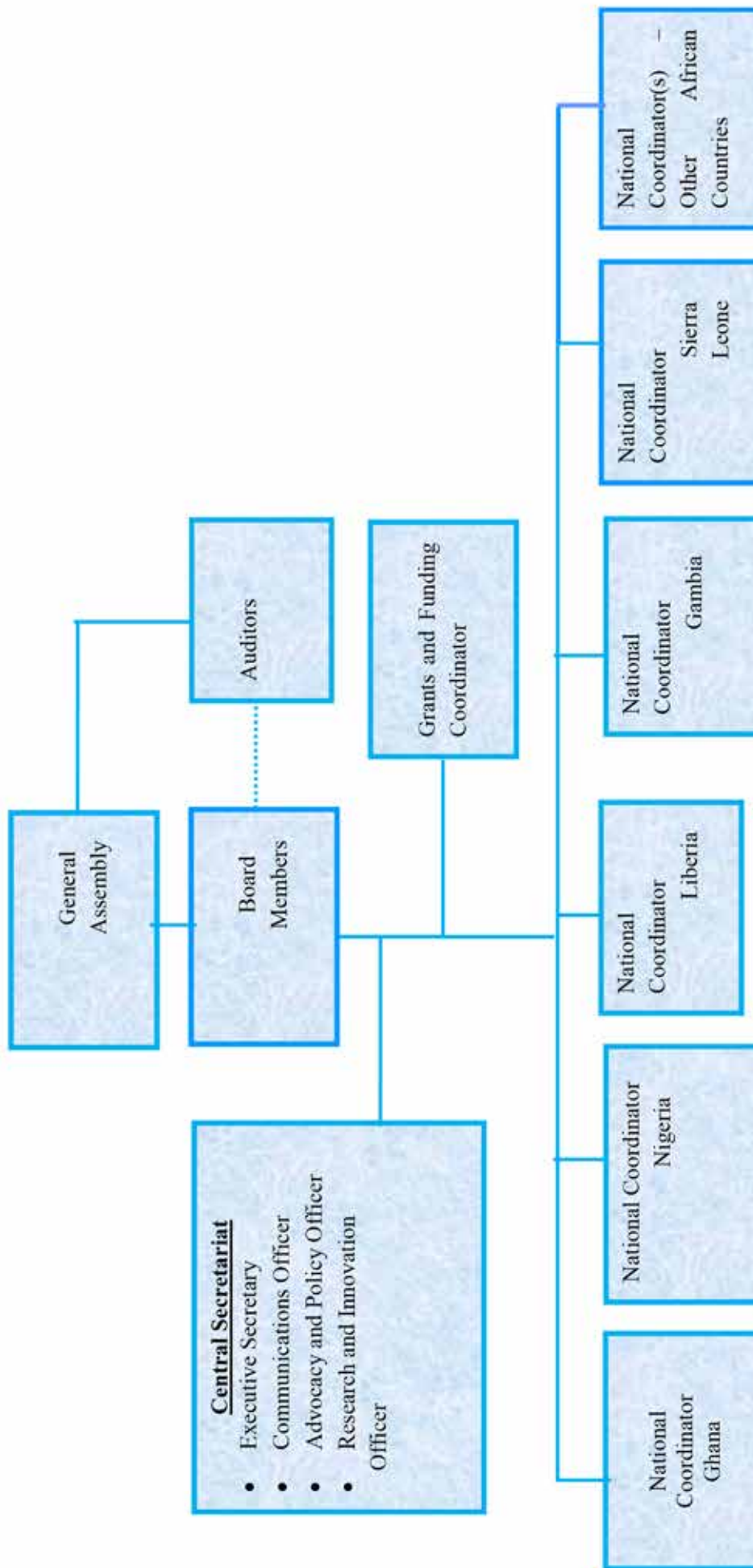
7.2 Human Resource Needs of WAAPA

Considering the strategies to be implemented in order to achieve the alliances objectives, a modified organizational structure is proposed. The structure reflects WAAPA of the future. It is envisaged that this structure will facilitate decision- making and also enhance performance monitoring and evaluation at the secretariat level and also amongst alliance members.

The WAAPA Strategic Plan of 2022-2027 has been prepared to reflect the vision and core values of the Alliance. The structure takes into account operational challenges from its activities towards its new mandate of networking in reducing alcohol induced challenges and NCDs. WAAPA will adopt a human resource system of fixed-term contracts and an annual appraisal system designed to demand the best from staff, in support of its vision. Exceptional performance will be rewarded and weed unperforming staff. The current structure takes cognizance of the operations of the Secretariat and the new Grants and Funding Office to develop action plans from the strategic plan towards meeting the shortterm and medium-term goals of the plan.

The new structure starts with the General Assembly being the highest management organ then the Board Members are responsible for overall policy development, direction, and management. The Executive Secretary is responsible for overall management and operation of WAAPA as well as policy implementation of the alliance, and is assisted by three (3) staff at the Secretariat and Grants office including a national coordinator; responsible for capacity development and coordination of the five alliance countries. The Executive Secretary and the National Coordinators, constitute the wheel to implement policies developed by the Board members for the achievement of WAAPA vision towards SDG goal. The Research and Innovation officer will develop a shared platform that supports interdisciplinary and collaborative research activities on alcohol policies and action plans relevant to West Africa.

Figure 1: Proposed Organogram



7.3 Action Plans

Action Plans have been developed to guide implementation of the selected strategies at the corporate level. These are presented in Table 4. The Secretariat and its National Coordinators may develop their detailed action plans from these alliance-level action plans.

A typical action plan format will have the following elements, among any others:

- Objective to be achieved
- Activities/action steps
- Time frame
- Responsibility
- Monitoring (how, when, who)
- Resources
- Milestones

7.4 Policies & Procedures

To facilitate the implementation of strategies and the achievement of the objectives set, existing policies will have to be enhanced, new once formulated, documented and operationalized. The strategy recommends an administrative system and procedures review committee to be constituted to update and/ or develop the following documents-HR Policy Manual, Scheme of Service, Detailed Job Descriptions of all positions, Conditions of Service, Accounting/Financial Management Manual, Audit Manual, Procurement Manual, Assets Management Manual, Gender Mainstreaming Manual etc. These policy documents will ensure uniformity of decisions and actions and also help promote transparency and fairness in the administrative and management systems of WAAPA.

7.5 Risk Management

WAAPA anticipates the under-mentioned potential risks and proposes measures to mitigate them through the implementation period.

Table 5: Risk Management

No.	Potential Risk	Mitigation Strategy
1	Non-fulfillment of donor pledges	WAAPA Secretariat will liaise closely with donors and partner institutions to ensure a collaborative working relationship and goodwill.
2	Inefficiency in program/project implementation	WAAPA Secretariat will continue to develop the capacity of Secretariat and National projects and support staff to be able to implement their programs efficiently and effectively.
3	Delays in reporting and meeting deadlines	Every effort will be made to sensitize and educate Secretariat, National coordinators and other officers on the need for timely submission of reports and meeting deadlines. Bottlenecks in project implementation will be addressed quickly.
4	Non-compliance with project and grant agreements	Implementation of project agreements will be monitored from the office of the Executive Secretary to ensure compliance with terms and conditions of agreements/contracts to build donor confidence.
5	Lack of cooperation from stakeholders	WAAPA Secretariat will make stakeholder management a key factor in achieving efficiency and effectiveness in the implementation of the strategic plan. This will be driven from the Secretariat.
6	Values, traditions and attitudes of staff and other key stakeholders	Although the strategic planning process involved all staff and other key stakeholders, some of these people may respond unfavorably to some policies and actions of Secretariat in the course of plan implementation. The Secretariat will ensure that the key elements of the Strategic Plan are shared with all alliance members and other stakeholders.

8.0 CONCLUSIONS

Reducing alcohol-related harm in West Africa will require major advocacy towards policy development, review, legislations, financial interventions CSO commitment and the buy-in of grassroots communities. Of course, the willingness of alcohol companies will be an appreciable factor. Currently, there is a unique window of opportunity arising from the activities of WAAPA and its partners including researchers in the alcohol-related sector. Although some countries including Ghana have made specific policy interventions on advertising alcohol on national television and others more needs to be done in the West African sub-region. The little gains made in policy interventions in some countries can be catapulted to other West African nations, to increase the speed of getting the attention of governments to redpond to the effects of alcohol-related harm. WAAPA activities must be set towards meeting the WHO SAFER priorities which should drive policies and interventions to include “strengthening restrictions on alcohol availability,” “advancing and enforcing drink driving counter measures,” “facilitating access to screening, brief interventions, and treatment,” “enforcing bans or comprehensive restrictions on alcohol advertising, sponsorship, and promotion,” and “raising prices on alcohol through excise taxes and pricing policies” (World Health Organization, 2018b).WAAPA activities must drive national processes which are key to the development and ownership of national alcohol plans and policies. However, domestic capacity in West Africa for effective implementation of alcohol related harm activities is often challenged by insufficiencies that prevent the negotiation, design and effective implementation of the necessary policies. It is important capacity needs are build to enhanced research and policy development in the alcohol related area for national alliances to be in a better position to analyze the alcohol related situation, create policies tailored to local circumstances, evaluate their position and make use of opportunities to arise and end avoidable deaths from alcohol related harm.

WAAPA presents a unique position to share knowledge, create partnerships and make the best use of it by supporting weaker national alliance members to increase capacity as well as knowledge-sharing for progress.

