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WAPIS NEWSLETTER



Tim MORRIS
Executive Director

EDITORIAL

Dear colleagues,

The WAPIS Programme third phase under the 11th European Development Fund is now underway. I'm delighted that the confidence in our organisation has been renewed to be part of this important initiative that will include the full roll-out of the WAPIS Programme in all ECOWAS Countries and Mauritania concluding in June 2022.

On behalf of INTERPOL's Secretary General, I would like to express INTERPOL's gratitude to be developing and implementing an important piece of the region's — and indeed of the world's — security architecture. I would also like to thank the European Union and the ECOWAS Commission for our fruitful collaboration in acknowledging security as a key challenge globally and especially in West Africa.

Thanks to the continued work of the police women and policemen sacrificing their lives every day, the security and safety of the people has increased during the last years. However, there are still many challenges to overcome in the coming years to leave behind us a world where our great grandchildren would not be scared to walk through an airport or a metro station. In fact, terrorism and transnational crimes are still concerning around the globe while the cybercrimes spread in our different countries as new technologies emerge.

As a result, the implementation of the WAPIS in all ECOWAS countries and Mauritania with the facilitation of information exchanges between countries law enforcement agencies gives us hope and an increased level of expectation primarily because it is a vital building block for the stability and the safety of the broader West Africa region.

IN THIS ISSUE

EDITORIAL	1
FOCUS	3
EVENTS	3
UPCOMING EVENT	8



This Programme is funded by the European Union



The WAPIS Programme will thus accomplish the following:

1. At national level, it will greatly enhance police data management. Today, almost the totality of police data in West African countries is in paper format and located across different locations and law enforcement agencies. The WAPIS Programme will assist these agencies (police, gendarmerie, customs, marine and forest, immigration, narcotics) digitizing their existing police data for both preservation against destruction (from disaster or conflict) and for insertion into the respective national WAPIS database.

The Programme will assist law enforcement agencies in developing common procedures for the centralized collection, management and consultation of police information. This will thus make police data more accessible to law enforcement officers when needed, be it for investigation or for control purposes. This data will include wanted persons, stolen and lost travel documents, stolen vehicles, firearms, and others. At regional level, the programme will dramatically increase information sharing within West Africa. With almost only paper-based police data, regional information sharing is taking place mostly on an ad hoc basis and thus remains limited to cooperation on specific cases. With the future regional police data sharing platform, law enforcement agencies will have the possibility to directly check a number of critical information shared by the entire West African law enforcement community.

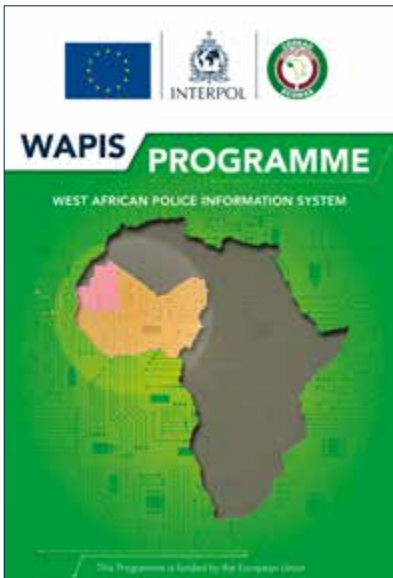
2. At global level, the WAPIS Programme will connect West Africa with the rest of the world, that is, every country of the region with the other 174 INTERPOL member countries through their INTERPOL National Central Bureau. Considering how West Africa has become an origin, transit or destination route of some of the world's most prominent criminal trafficking activities, this will enhance the capacity of law enforcement all around the world to cooperate with their counterparts in West Africa to fight transnational organised crime.
3. At first sight, it appears that the WAPIS Programme is primarily about creating databases. In fact, I would say that it is primarily about creating electronic police data. This point is extremely important. Paper-based police information is difficult to retrieve and share and therefore very little used. By digitizing current paper-based police data and by enabling law enforcement agencies to create electronic data on a routine basis, the WAPIS Programme will allow West African law enforcement to develop a critical mass of electronic police data that officers will be able to use to support their investigations, perform border controls, or share internationally to better cooperate with colleagues in the region and beyond.

To say it differently, electronic police data will allow West African law enforcement to be better connected, amongst themselves and with the rest of the world and this is where the WAPIS vision meets INTERPOL's vision: 'Connecting police for a safer world'.

Thus, WAPIS Programme is key strategic for INTERPOL and all the necessary technical and human resources capabilities will be provided in order for this programme to be a success.

Tim MORRIS

FOCUS



The WAPIS Programme enters its third phase under the European Development Fund

Funded by the European Union, pilot experiences has already been implemented in four (04) countries (Benin, Ghana, Mali, and Niger) between 2013 and 2016. In addition, a transitional phase has been executed to deploy the system in four more countries (Côte d'Ivoire, Burkina Faso, Chad and Mauritania).

Following these phases, under the 11th European Development Fund, the WAPIS Programme was granted 28 million euros to move into its third phase of full roll out. The implementation of the

activities started on November 15th 2017 and will last 55 months throughout all the ECOWAS Countries and Mauritania.

In order to be more effective and closer to the local contexts, for this third phase, unlike the two previous ones, the WAPIS Programme team took office in Abidjan at the Regional Bureau in Côte d'Ivoire. This team, within a five (5) year period, will work closely with the European Union, the ECOWAS and the beneficiaries' countries to implement this instrument that will help the West African Region be a safer place.

EVENT

WAPIS Steering Committee meeting in Abidjan (February 2018)

The WAPIS Programme held its first Steering Committee meeting in Abidjan on 14 February 2018, under the framework of the EU development Fund, which started in October 2017.

Officials from the ECOWAS Commission, the European Union and INTERPOL attended the meeting to discuss the progress status of the WAPIS Programme, the study on the regional platform and the status of the two additional projects granted by the UE to the Programme: The Automated Fingerprinting Information System (AFIS) and the Support for West African Integrated Maritime System (SWAIMS).

The ECOWAS Commission and the EU unanimously reaffirmed the importance of WAPIS and expressed their strong commitment to implement it. The Steering Committee



First Steering Committee, Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire, February 2018

will meet again in June 2018 during the WAPIS phase 3 official launching event under the European Development Fund expected to be organized on June 26-27.

EVENT

IT Administrators training on systems and Network (March 2018)

From 5-16 March 2018, IT systems administrators from the four pilot countries (Benin, Ghana, Mali and Niger) took a two-week training session on the advanced management of Linux systems and Cisco networks in Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire.

Eight system administrators, two per country, achieved their training goals in Abidjan. The participants are now able to ensure the proper technical functioning of the information system installed within each Data Collection and Registration Center (DACORE). They will also now be able to add new computer stations on their own, and manage the day-to-day administration of the network.

These training sessions strengthened the will to guarantee a sustainability of the system once the partners will retire at the end of the implementation period. More trainings



WAPIS IT Administrators training in Abidjan, (Côte d'Ivoire) 16 March 2018

will be organized with the new beneficiary's countries once the system is installed and effective.

ECOWAS Expert Committee Meeting on regional data sharing (March 2018)

Experts from the 15 ECOWAS Countries and Mauritania benefiting from the programme met in Abidjan from 27-29 March 2018 to examine the options and the implications of a study that has been done by an external consultant to explore all technical options that can be deployed in the region

The WAPIS Programme objective is to provide beneficiary countries with tools to enhance regional cooperation to tackle transnational organized crime and terrorism. Specifically, the Programme also aims to set up a mechanism that will allow data to be shared at the regional level.

The conclusions of this meeting will be shared and discussed in the next WAPIS newsletter.



ECOWAS Expert Committee opening ceremony, Abidjan (Côte d'Ivoire), 27 March 2018

EVENT

WAPIS strategic visits in new beneficiaries countries (February and March 2018)

For the full roll out of WAPIS, The programme will organize strategic visits to new countries participating (Guinea-Conakry, Senegal, Cape Verde, Guinea-Bissau, Nigeria, Sierra Leone, Gambia, Liberia, Togo) in order to get the formal acceptance of the local authorities for the start of WAPIS implementation.

Cape Verde (February 2018)

From 7-9 February 2018, a delegation of INTERPOL officials supported by the European Union delegation in Cape Verde visited the country to introduce the West African Police Information System (WAPIS) and have a preliminary agreement on the implementation of WAPIS in Cape Verde.

The delegation led by INTERPOL Executive Director for Resource Management, Mr. Laurent GROSSE-KOZLOWSKI, met with the Minister of Justice, the Minister of Internal Affairs, the Attorney General and other high level representative officials.

Unanimously, the officials showed strong interest in the implementation of WAPIS and reassured the delegation of their entire availability to support the process. Following this strategic visit, a technical audit mission will take place



Strategic Visit in Cape Verde, Meeting with the Director of the judicial police, 8 February 2018

in March to evaluate the technologies and systems already installed in the country, which will be the basis of work for the WAPIS system.

EVENT

Senegal (February 2018)

In order to facilitate the implementation of WAPIS in Senegal, a mixed delegation composed by the European Union and INTERPOL visited Dakar to get the local authorities formal agreement to launch the activity within the country.

In fact, on February 23rd 2018, the delegation had a meeting with the Minister of Interior, Mr Aly Ndiaye, whom expressed the firm commitment of the government of Senegal to collaborate for the success of this Programme in the country.



Meeting between the Interpol-UE delegation with the Senegalese Minister of Interior, 23 February 2018

Togo (February 2018)

From 26-28 February 2018, a mission led by the head of the INTERPOL Regional Bureau for West Africa traveled to Lomé in Togo to meet with the high level local authorities to introduce them to the West Africa Police information system and get their support for its implementation. During this visit, they met with the Minister of Public security and Civil Protection, Mr YARK Damehame and the Prime Minister whom expressed the full support of its government to collaborate for the success of WAPIS implementation.



Strategic visit in Togo, meeting with the Prime Minister of Togo, 27 February 2018.

EVENT



ECOWAS meeting with the SADC, EASF with the participation of WAPIS, Abuja (Nigeria), 19 February 2018

WAPIS participates in the Benchmarking visit to ECOWAS by the Southern Africa Development Community (SDC) and Eastern Africa Standby Force (EASF)

Delegations from the southern Africa Development Community (SADC) and Eastern Africa Standby Force (EASF) visited the Economic Community of West African States Commission (ECOWAS) Headquarters in Abuja from 19-20 February 2018 to learn ECOWAS security mechanism.

During this meeting, the WAPIS representative to ECOWAS, Mr. Yansaneh Mohamed, made a brief

presentation on the West Africa Police Information system, a Programme funded by the European Union, implemented by INTERPOL and supported by the ECOWAS.

Following this presentation, the visitors expressed interest to replicate WAPIS model in their respective regions.

UPCOMING EVENT

4th Annual meeting of the ID4 Africa Movement (Abuja, Nigeria).

WAPIS will participate to the 4th annual meeting of the ID4Africa movement in Abuja/Nigeria on 24-26 April 2018. INTERPOL and its WAPIS programme has been invited to share

its expertise on security and identity systems including the use of IDs by law enforcement. WAPIS will hold a stand to exhibit its activities with the others participants.

WAPIS 3EDF Official launching Event (Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire)

From 25-27 June 2018, WAPIS will organize, in cooperation with the EU and ECOWAS, an official launching event in Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire. This event will spotlight the starting-up for the full roll-out of the

WAPIS Programme under the 11th European Development Fund. High Level Representatives from the Host Country, Countries participating, ECOWAS Commission and EU will attend this event.



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