



PROJECT AGWE

WEST AFRICA

ASSISTING AND ENHANCING MARITIME LAW ENFORCEMENT CAPABILITIES IN BENIN, CÔTE D'IVOIRE, GHANA, NIGERIA AND TOGO.

Situation

The Gulf of Guinea and surrounding countries, stretching from Senegal in the north to Angola in the south, is a vital intersection and hub for international trade.

Oil from Nigeria and other oil-producing nations is shipped across these strategic waters, as are goods transiting to and from the rest of Africa and other regions. Criminals target merchant ships and their crew along West Africa's maritime trade routes.

The threats are multifaceted and transnational, making it necessary for a wide range of law enforcement agencies from different countries to work together to ensure the safety and security of the maritime environment.



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Project activities

INTERPOL's Project AGWE enhances maritime law enforcement capabilities in five countries in the Gulf of Guinea – Benin, Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, Nigeria and Togo – by linking first responders, investigators and prosecutors, and increasing cross-border collaboration.

Activities under Project AGWE include:

- **Training:** these sessions cover the established international methodologies of investigating and prosecuting maritime piracy and other maritime-based organized crime.
- **Mock crime scenes and trials:** INTERPOL experts create scenarios, based on real cases that occurred in the region, and provide "evidence" for first responders, law enforcement officials and prosecutors to practice the application of the law.
- **Exchange visits, investigative meetings and case coordination meetings:** officials from beneficiary countries work side by side with their colleagues in other countries and discuss cases of common interest or concern.

Donor: United States Department of State, Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs (INL)

Timeframe: 2015-2023 (four phases)

Budget: EUR 8.1 million

Key successes:

- 764 officials trained through 54 capacity building activities (from February 2015 to December 2020).
- Beneficiary countries have improved their capabilities to coordinate at the inter-agency level, process a crime scene, and conduct crew interviews.
- The Nigerian Navy set up a dedicated Maritime Crime Investigation Desk in Abuja, which provides biometrics of suspects for cross-checking against INTERPOL's databases.

FUNDED BY:
UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF STATE
BUREAU OF INTERNATIONAL NARCOTICS
AND LAW ENFORCEMENT AFFAIRS (INL)



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