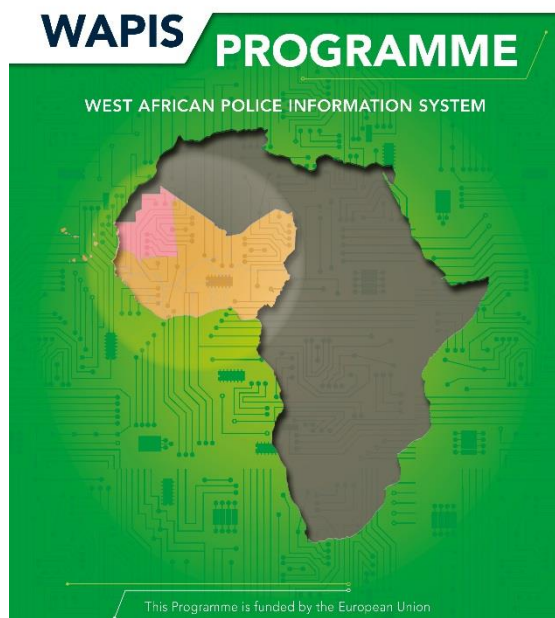


WAPIS Programme Progress Report Executive Summary



Contract number CRIS/390-579

Reporting period : from 01 March 2019 to 30 October 2019

Date of publication: 22 November 2019

Original: English



CONTENTS

PROGRAMME PHASE SYNOPSIS	3
1 KEY ACHIEVEMENTS	4
1.1 Support from national governments and regional institutions for the implementation of WAPIS at a national and regional level	4
1.2 Implementation of the WAPIS System at the national level, including, through the provision of operational and technical support and training	4
1.3 Development and implementation of the WAPIS regional data-sharing platform in cooperation with the ECOWAS Commission and ECOWAS Member States (and possibly Mauritania)	7
1.4 National WAPIS Systems being connected with INTERPOL channels through INTERPOL National Central Bureaus	7
1.5 ECOWAS Member States and Mauritania adopting the required legal framework at the national and regional level	7
1.6 The WAPIS System being handed over to national and regional authorities ensuring that the System can continue in the long term.	7
2 RISKS AND CURRENT CHALLENGES	8
2.1 Political	8
2.2 Technical.....	8
2.3 Human Resources	9
2.4 Legal.....	10
3 MONITORING AND EVALUATION FRAMEWORK	11



PROGRAMME PHASE SYNOPSIS

Title	Supporting the strengthening of police information systems in the wider West African region
Duration	The overall duration of the Action is 55 months (15 Nov. 2017 to 14 Jun. 2022)
Geographical scope	The geographical scope of the Action covers West Africa: Benin, Burkina Faso, Cape Verde, the Gambia, Ghana, Guinea-Bissau, Guinea, Cote d'Ivoire, Liberia, Mali, Mauritania, Nigeria, Niger, Senegal, Sierra Leone, and Togo.
Total Cost	EUR 28 M, fully financed by the European Commission.
Target Groups	The main target groups will be Law enforcement agencies (Police, Gendarmerie, Customs, Immigration Services, etc.) across the region.
Final Beneficiaries	The final beneficiaries are people from the targeted countries.
Overall objective	The overall objective of this action is to increase the capacity of West African law enforcement authorities to combat transnational crime and terrorism through enhanced information management and sharing.
Purpose (specific objectives)	The specific objectives of this Action are: (1) To harmonise and provide a framework for the management of police information at the national and regional level in the wider West Africa region. (2) To improve the West African law enforcement community's capability to collect, centralise, manage, and share their police data within the sub-region. (3) To enhance global information sharing between the West African law enforcement community and the global law enforcement community.
Expected results	The expected results of the Action are: (1) Support from national governments and regional institutions for the implementation of WAPIS at the national and regional level. (2) Implementation of the WAPIS System at the national level, including, through the provision of operational and technical support and training. (3) Development and implementation of the WAPIS regional data-sharing platform in cooperation with the ECOWAS Commission and ECOWAS Member States (and possibly Mauritania). (4) National WAPIS Systems being connected with INTERPOL channels through INTERPOL National Central Bureaus. (5) ECOWAS Member States and Mauritania adopting the required legal framework at the national and regional level. (6) The WAPIS System being handed over to national and regional authorities ensuring the System can continue in the long term.

1 KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

The progress made by the WAPIS Programme during this reporting period is presented following the six outputs expected from the Programme.

1.1 SUPPORT FROM NATIONAL GOVERNMENTS AND REGIONAL INSTITUTIONS FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF WAPIS AT A NATIONAL AND REGIONAL LEVEL

During the last 06 months, a strong support was provided to the WAPIS Programme by the ECOWAS Commission and its bodies, the EU Commission and the INTERPOL top management.

This support is illustrated by the following meetings during which the WAPIS Programme was one of the key items of the agenda:

- The Extraordinary Session of the Conference of ECOWAS Heads of State and Government on Terrorism, held on 14 September 2019 in Ouagadougou
- The fifty-fifth ordinary session of the Authority of Heads of State and Government of ECOWAS held on 29 June 2019 in Abuja
- The forty-second regular session of the ECOWAS Mediation and Security Council at Ministerial level Abuja, June 24, 2019

The recommendations adopted during these meetings urged ECOWAS Member States to fulfil their respective obligations in order to accelerate the implementation of the West African Police Information System (WAPIS).

As a result, out of the 16 beneficiary countries, 13 have signed the Memorandum of Understanding on the implementation of the Programme. Only Cape Verde, Ghana and Guinea Bissau have not yet signed the MoU.

All the countries, except Guinea Bissau (15/16), have designated Special Point of Contacts (SPOC). Five countries have WAPIS national committees (WANACO) formally established.

1.2 IMPLEMENTATION OF THE WAPIS SYSTEM AT THE NATIONAL LEVEL, INCLUDING, THROUGH THE PROVISION OF OPERATIONAL AND TECHNICAL SUPPORT AND TRAINING

In the four pilot countries, namely Benin, Ghana, Mali and Niger, the WAPIS DACOREs are already operational. In Niger and Benin, the Programme has completed the operationalization of WAPIS network extension to the selected remote sites within the greater capital. In Ghana and Mali, the establishment of the network is ongoing and it is expected to be completed by November 2019. Additional training sessions have been provided in these countries to new users. In Benin, a network monitoring training was provided to the DACORE technical staff to enable them to supervise and assist

remote users. This training is to be held in the left countries to build the capacity of the DACORE technical staff in network monitoring.

Among beneficiary countries from 2016, Chad, Cote d'Ivoire and Mauritania were able to identify premises to host WAPIS DACORE and requested the support of the Programme for their renovation. With the support of the Programme, the renovation of the DACORE in Chad is completed and is ongoing in Côte d'Ivoire and Mauritania.

For the new beneficiary countries from 2017, Gambia, Guinea, Liberia, Nigeria and Sierra Leone have formally notified to WAPIS Programme that they have provided premises to host WAPIS DACORE. Upon the request of countries, the Programme is closely working with the national authorities to define the technical specifications for the renovation. The Programme continues to urge the remaining countries to provide premises for the DACOREs.

Following the signing of MoUs and identification of DACORE premises by countries, IT equipment was shipped in several beneficiary countries:

Period	Country	Number of Workstations	Funding
April 2019	Burkina Faso	70 (UPS, Computers, scanners)	Trust Funds
July 2019	Gambia	40 (UPS, Computers, scanners)	11 th FED
July 2019	Liberia	40 (UPS, Computers, scanners)	11 th FED
September 2019	Mauritania	40 (UPS, Computers, scanners)	Trust Funds
September 2019	Togo	40 (UPS, Computers, scanners)	11 th FED
September 2019	Sierra Leone	40 (UPS, Computers, scanners)	11 th FED
September 2019	Chad	47 (scanners, UPS, hard drive, switch, rack, server, computers, projector)	Trust Funds
October 2019	Côte d'Ivoire	40 (UPS, Computers, scanners)	Trust Funds

Table 2 : IT equipment shipment

The shipment of the IT equipment enables the Programme to initiate the WAPIS user training sessions. Training sessions were organised in Chad (2nd session 30 September – 11 October 2019), Benin (19 – 23 August 2019), Ghana (4 – 8 March 2019), Mali (30 September – 4 October 2019), the Gambia (19-23 August 2019) and Liberia (2-6 September 2019). More user training sessions are planned in December in Mauritania, Côte d'Ivoire and Togo where the equipment has already been shipped; and this will also be extended to other countries once WAPIS equipment is delivered. More sessions up to 4 per year will also be organised in countries to get a maximum of officers trained in the use of the system.

The Programme also provided IT equipment to enhance the digitisation of police data in Burkina Faso and Sierra Leone, where police information systems already exist. The Programme is working with the countries in order to establish their specific roadmap.

In all, 9 out of 16 countries have started the creation of electronic police data at the national level. The volume of data created is also increasing steadily.

As part of the activities to assist countries in identifying the organisation required to run the DACORE effectively, the Programme organised workshops on exchange of best practices in the implementation of WAPIS. From 12-13 June 2019, the first workshop on exchange of best practices was held in Niamey, attended by SPOCs from Burkina Faso, Cabo Verde, Côte d'Ivoire, Guinea, Guinea Bissau, Mauritania, Senegal and Togo. From 10-11 July 2019 in Ghana, the second workshop on exchange of best practices for the SPOCs of the English speaking countries in Ghana was held. These workshops enabled SPOCs of new WAPIS countries to witness the System implementation and learn from the experience of Niger and Ghana for a smoother implementation in their respective countries.

At the operational level, WAPIS Programme was involved in the ADWENPA IV operation, which took place simultaneously in 13 West African countries from 16 to 22 July 2019. ADWENPA is the operational phase of the INTERPOL Capacity Building Project to Strengthen Border Management in West Africa, financially supported by the German Federal Foreign Office. As the title suggests, this project aims to reinforce border management in West Africa by means of INTERPOL's Policing Capabilities (INTERPOL databases) to identify and intercept stolen vehicles, lost or stolen passports and wanted individuals. The Programme participation (in the 4 pilot countries) was intended to support the ADWENPA operation in achieving its above mentioned objectives by allowing, in addition to INTERPOL tools and services, the consultation of new national databases. This consultation consisted in querying national databases to identify potential wanted persons, stolen vehicles, and stolen travel documents, known at national level and not listed in the INTERPOL databases, on the one hand, and looking for the criminal records of suspects arrested during the operation, on the other hand.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

1.3 DEVELOPMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE WAPIS REGIONAL DATA-SHARING PLATFORM IN COOPERATION WITH THE ECOWAS COMMISSION AND ECOWAS MEMBER STATES (AND POSSIBLY MAURITANIA)

The Programme has assisted ECOWAS Commission and ECOWAS Member states to adopt the type of data sharing mechanisms that they will use. The WAPIS Programme is currently drafting the technical specifications for the development of the regional WAPIS software. The Programme will assist ECOWAS Commission and ECOWAS Member states to identify and adopt the required legal framework for regional data sharing.

1.4 NATIONAL WAPIS SYSTEMS BEING CONNECTED WITH INTERPOL CHANNELS THROUGH INTERPOL NATIONAL CENTRAL BUREAUS

As the DACORE is operational in Benin, Ghana, Mali and Niger, the Programme has initiated the INTERPOL I-24/7 extension to the national WAPIS system in these countries. The agreement on the use of I-24/7 was presented to these countries and the Programme expected it to be signed by the end of 2019. Ghana and Niger have already signed the agreement. Niger is the first beneficiary country to be connected to the INTERPOL I-24/7. The three other countries will follow by the end of 2019.

WAPIS Programme has also initiated the development of a Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) to access INTERPOL databases from the national WAPIS systems. Once finalised, the draft version will be presented to all the beneficiary countries.

The INTERPOL I-24/7 network infrastructure allows direct access to INTERPOL databases from the national WAPIS systems.

1.5 ECOWAS MEMBER STATES AND MAURITANIA ADOPTING THE REQUIRED LEGAL FRAMEWORK AT THE NATIONAL AND REGIONAL LEVEL

All the pilot countries apart from Mali (Benin, Ghana, and Niger) have the required legal framework in place. While Mali has put in place a legal text establishing the WANACO, the one establishing the DACORE is still pending.

In the entering countries, only Guinea was able to implement the required legal framework of WAPIS.

1.6 THE WAPIS SYSTEM BEING HANDED OVER TO NATIONAL AND REGIONAL AUTHORITIES ENSURING THAT THE SYSTEM CAN CONTINUE IN THE LONG TERM.

Based on the experience shared by the pilot countries, the Programme is preparing a template for budgets to run a DACORE. The template will be presented to beneficiary countries in the beginning of 2020.

2 RISKS AND CURRENT CHALLENGES

2.1 POLITICAL

Beneficiary countries and their governments are the key players in implementing the WAPIS Programme. Law enforcement agencies are always willing to acquire new tools, but the efforts invested, including in terms of human resources and budget, will only yield results if the Programme is supported at the highest political level. Therefore, greater involvement and accountability from governments will definitely speed up implementation. The political situation in a country has a direct impact on the implementation of WAPIS. Some countries are facing political crises which lead to constant personnel changes at a high level or even a regular restructuring of Law Enforcement Agencies. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

In order to mitigate the political risks and to ensure continued support from governments, the WAPIS Programme is working closely with national authorities and communicating with them on a daily basis to improve collaboration. For instance, the MoU between INTERPOL and beneficiary countries is an important tool in enhancing countries' political accountability. It sets out each party's obligations, the administrative, technical, and legal requirements, and officially sets out the basis of the cooperation between INTERPOL and the beneficiary country, thus avoiding the progress of WAPIS being linked to an individual who may be transferred to another post at any moment. So far, only 03 countries (Cape Verde, Ghana, and Guinea Bissau) have not signed the MoU.

The Programme is also liaising and working closely with the EU Commission and the ECOWAS Commission to strengthen countries' political will at a high level. EU Delegations in each of the beneficiary countries play an important role as they provide a strategic and political interface with the Country and they oversee activities on the ground.

Programme implementation planning is also reviewed and readjusted if needed, by the Strategic steering committee which is composed of the EU Commission, the ECOWAS Commission, and INTERPOL.

2.2 TECHNICAL

Most of the countries in the West African region suffer from a general lack of IT infrastructure and law enforcement agencies are particularly ill-equipped. Reliable and affordable means of communication and electricity are often not available at location targeted by the Programme in the beneficiary countries. This is a huge challenge for the Programme which is based on data-sharing and connectivity between law enforcement agencies. This situation varies from country to country, which has a direct

impact on the number of remote sites connected to WAPIS, as the budget for WAPIS extensions as set out in the agreement with the EU Commission is equally shared between all countries.

Allocating suitable premises for the WAPIS centre has also proven to be an issue for several countries. In some cases, the country's law enforcement agencies already have insufficient space and it is difficult for them to find a reliable location to host the DACORE. In other cases, the premises allocated need some renovation. This creates a problem because the Programme's budget does not provide for renovating the premises.

Finally, long term functioning of technical equipment is very important: INTERPOL has noted that some countries have failed to properly maintain the IT equipment. Maintenance of this equipment is paid for by WAPIS up to the end of the Programme in 2022. To ensure that the system can continue functioning after 2022, the Programme is working with local authorities to start including, from the outset, a specific budget line allocated to equipment maintenance.

2.3 HUMAN RESOURCES

Finding someone to act as a high-level motivated focal point, and finding skilled personnel, can sometimes be a significant challenge in the implementation process. The Programme works in beneficiary countries through a focal point or "single point of contact" (SPOC). This person should have a sufficient level to be able to "make things happen" within his/her own agency and to have an impact on other participating agencies while still working at an operational level. In some countries, the personnel assigned to the system are not sufficiently skilled to fulfil this mission, which thereby slows down the implementation process.

The WAPIS Programme has been working closely with governments to designate adequate SPOCs as indicated in the requirements, and a training strategy is being tested to serve all the personnel working with the system. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

For this reason, the Programme and the stakeholders (EU, ECOWAS) are lobbying governments to take this issue into consideration and to put in place incentives for personnel working with the system.

2.4 LEGAL

From a legal standpoint, INTERPOL faces three major difficulties in implementing the WAPIS Programme: data protection legislation, legislation on the national WAPIS system, and the legal framework to establish the regional mechanism for criminal information sharing.

Firstly, the implementation of WAPIS at a national level requires appropriate national data protection legislation. Not all countries have put in place the required data protection legislation. Furthermore, while some WAPIS beneficiary countries do have data protection legislation, the content of this legislation may not necessarily be uniform across all countries and may also not specifically address issues unique to data processing through WAPIS. From country missions which have been conducted, it appears that the enactment of data protection legislation falls within the mandate of ministries of technology or of communication and technology. Law enforcement authorities participating in WAPIS in countries with no data protection legislation do not appear to have leverage with those state authorities whose mandate is to adopt data protection legislation.

To overcome this challenge, INTERPOL has suggested that beneficiary countries adopt a uniform “best practices” document for data processing in the WAPIS System that conforms to the 2010 ECOWAS Supplementary Act and international data protection standards. However, not a binding instrument, a “best practices” guide can assist in: (i) allowing WAPIS implementation in countries that have yet to enact data protection legislation and/or establish independent data protection authorities; and (ii) putting in place a uniform WAPIS data protection standard for all WAPIS beneficiary countries. This document was drafted and presented during the ECOWAS expert committee meeting on WAPIS Programme held in Abidjan from 22 – 24 October 2019. The committee recommended the adoption of this guide by the beneficiary countries.

Secondly, the manner in which WAPIS has been implemented has not been the same across all pilot beneficiary countries. In WAPIS beneficiary countries with a civil law system, legal texts creating the WAPIS National Committee (WANACO) and a specific legal entity to run the System have been created by subsidiary legislation, i.e. legal texts adopted by the Executive rather than the legislature. This has, however, not been the case for common law countries. Regardless of the legal system a beneficiary country has, it is crucial that WAPIS is embedded within the legislative framework of the beneficiary country in order to ensure the legitimacy, accountability, governance, and sustainability of the System.

Thirdly, the type of data sharing mechanism was discussed and some recommendations were made during an ECOWAS expert committee meeting. The recommendations were validated by the heads of security services and endorsed by the ministers responsible for security. The ECOWAS Commission

should now identify and adopt the legal framework for the establishment of the regional data sharing platform.

Finally, INTERPOL has retained two regional legal experts on data protection issues in West Africa. One expert is Francophone, from a civil law jurisdiction, while the other is anglophone and from a common law background. Both experts are available to assist beneficiary countries with the legal aspects of WAPIS implementation, particularly data protection.

3 MONITORING AND EVALUATION FRAMEWORK

After a Results-Oriented Monitoring (ROM) requested by the European Commission in late 2018, and an internal INTERPOL evaluation early 2019, it was decided to invest in and improve the monitoring and evaluation (M&E) framework of the Programme.

Monitoring and evaluation in WAPIS Programme is important because:

- it provides the only consolidated source of information showcasing Programme progress;
- it allows stakeholders and beneficiary countries to learn from each other's and lessons to be shared more easily;
- it allows the Programme to generate reports that contribute to transparency and accountability;
- it reveals difficulties the Programme may face during the implementation, and provides a basis for questioning assumptions;

To start the M&E framework improvement, all existing planning documents were reviewed. As a result, the logical framework (Logframe) was reviewed and improved. A WAPIS Programme Activity Based Plan which list all activities and sub-activities to implement was developed.

Once the new Logframe and the Activity Based Plan approved by the steering committee, the Programme will develop a country workplan for each of the beneficiary countries and the ECOWAS Commission. Every month, the progress of the Programme will be monitored against the new targets set.

The implementation of the M&E framework will help determine the extent to which the programme is on track in each beneficiary country and to make any needed corrections accordingly. By measuring the initial responses to WAPIS Programme outputs, stakeholders and beneficiary countries will assess the immediate outcomes of WAPIS Programme implementation.



INTERPOL

General Secretariat
200 quai Charles de Gaulle
69006 Lyon
France
Tel: +33 4 72 44 70 00
Fax: +33 4 72 44 71 63

Twitter: @INTERPOL_HQ
YouTube: INTERPOLHQ

www.interpol.int