



ECOSAP

ECOWAS SMALL ARMS CONTROL PROGRAMME

**UPDATE ON THE PROGRAMME
May – June 2009**

Mohamed L. Coulibaly
Programme Manager

I am pleased to share with you recent developments on the implementation of ECOSAP Work Plan after the last steering Committee which took place in May 2009, Bamako, Mali. The activities so far implemented include;

- The conduct of two Cluster meetings
- Support for quick impact projects
- Redesign of the ECOSAP website
- completion of the survey processes
- Development of National Action Plans
- Support for the establishment of secretariats for national coalition of civil society organisations in Member States.

Cluster meetings-:

Cluster A (**Cape Verde, Gambia, Guinea, Guinea Bissau**) and Cluster C (**Burkina Faso, Niger, Mali and Senegal**) held meetings in Banjul, Republic of Gambia and Bamako, Mali on the 23rd -24th, June 09 and 29th -30th June 09 respectively. Representatives from the NATCOMs, Civil society and UNDP Focal points were in attendance. The prime objective of the cluster meeting was to review, plan and forecast activities of our partners (National Commission and CSOs). In these meetings, the NATCOMs and CSOs were made to present narrative reports of their activities implemented from Jan-June 2009, the challenges encountered, lessons learnt, recommendations and planned activities. To set the platform for participants to review their activities and plan for the next six (6) months, the ECOSAP Work Plan (Jul-Dec 09) was presented to participants.

Aside the fact that the meeting was a forum where participants exchanged information and experiences, ECOSAP seized the opportunity to discuss the Programme's new focus in the framework of supporting **arms violence reduction community based projects**; reinforcement of capacities in **drafting financial reports, Project Writing Methodology**, development of **Activity Work Plans and methodology for developing National Action Plans**. The objectives of the two meetings were met and feedback from participants showed that the exchange of information, knowledge and experience shared was appreciated.

The participants informed that since the beginning of the Programme in 2006, this was the first time CSOs, NATCOMs and UNDP were brought together to discuss ways of improving activities implementation in a Cluster meeting. Furthermore, they informed that it was an opportunity for them to have more clarity on ECOSAP's new focus in the following months and their capacity was built on how to develop their own activity plans. These technical meetings attracted government and political figures at the opening sessions. For instance, In Gambia, the Minister of youths and sports who chaired the opening sessions, The speaker of the House of Assembly, members of the Diplomatic corps and permanent secretaries of government institutions were in attendance. In Mali, the honorable Minister of Integration on behalf of the Government, chaired the meeting and in his remarks informed that the Malian President revealed that he personally and the Government strongly support ECOSAP.

Quick Impact Project- Funds were availed to execute quick impact projects in Republics of Ghana, Mali and Cape Verde.

In Ghana; to procure arms detection equipment and logistics support for their immigration services; to collate obsolete weapons for central destruction domiciled by the Ghana police and to develop a web site for the NATCOM.

In Mali; the project was used to organize a forum to review administrative measures for the control of locally manufactured weapons, to inform local producers of arms on need to mark fabricated weapons and to also encourage as many as possible for reconversion activities. In the course of executing this project, it was revealed that an average 400 local weapons manufacturers are registered in Mali, an estimated amount of 25 weapons are fabricated per manufacturer which amounts to 1,000 locally manufactured weapons per annum.

In Cape Verde; to procure an arms/explosives scanner equipment for the seaport of Praia, Cape Verde and to train relevant personnel on its use and preliminary maintenance as well.

In Togo, the NATCOM completed their **SALWs survey processes** in the month of May with a validation workshop. One of the key revelations of the survey is that the quantity and sophistication of local fabricated weapons in the country is high and most of these arms are from neighboring African countries especially Ghana.

National Action Plans- Mali and Cape Verde have initiated processes towards the development of their National Action Plans.

Redesign of the ECOSAP website- The Programme held a one week technical session with the ECOWAS website Master and the Communications officer attached to the ECOWAS Small Arms Unit to improve the ECOSAP website at Bamako. A new design was discussed with ECOSAP professional staff and work is still on going to finalize and upgrade the site. The need and necessity for the website to be operated from Bamako was keenly proposed and discussed, whereby ECOSAP can own the website and contribute to the content when required.

Support to Civil Society - In the framework of supporting coalition of civil society organizations working on SALWs, ECOSAP have provision to support the establishment of secretariats in the fifteen (15) ECOWAS member states, through West African Action Network on Small Arms (WAANSA). Funds were availed to WAANSA for the establishment of these secretariats for the coalition of CSOs.