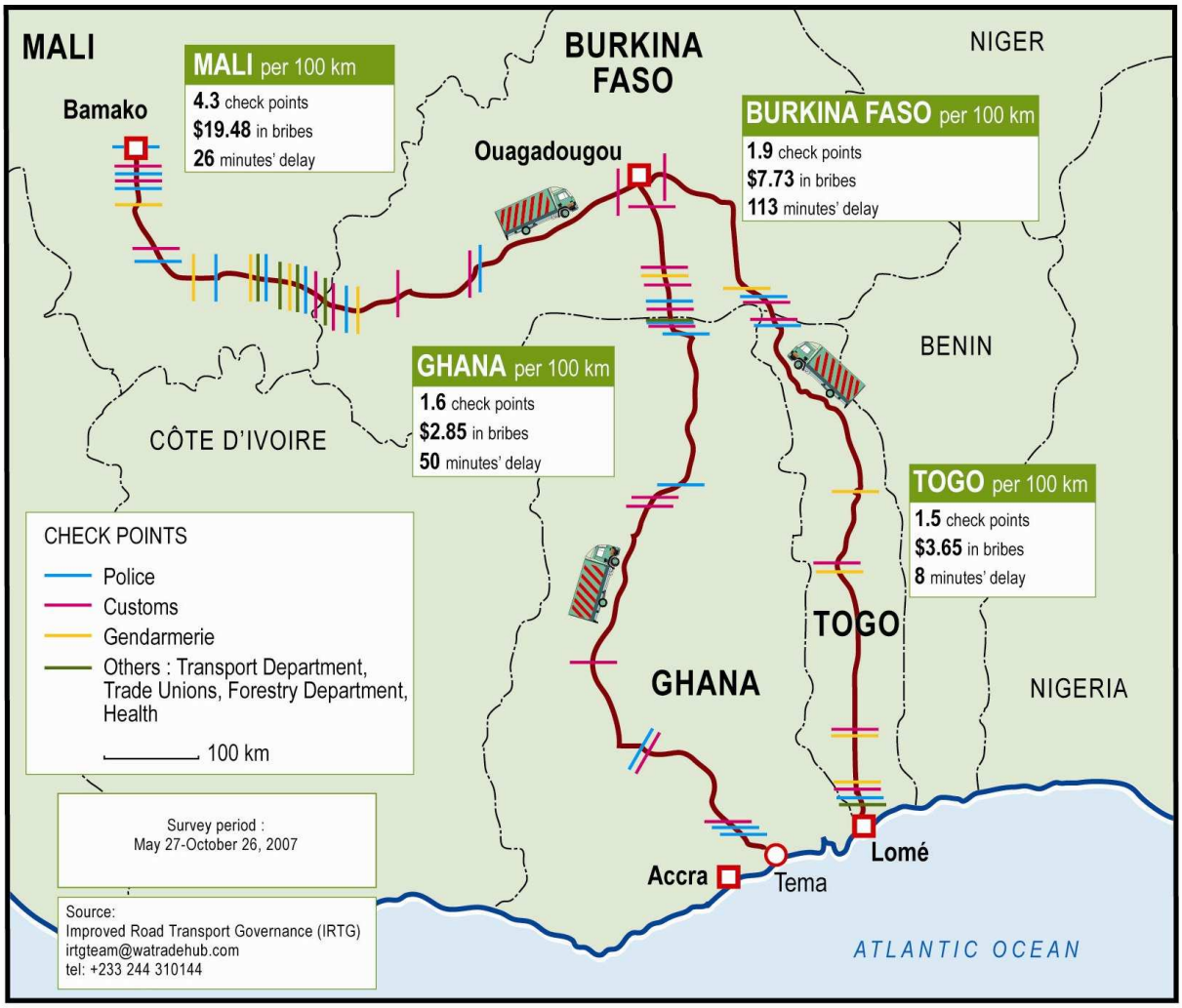
IMPROVED ROAD TRANSPORT GOVERNANCE ON INTERSTATE ROAD CORRIDORS

Results from May 27 to October 26, 2007



I. Introduction

Everyone knows that multiple barriers, long delays, and illicit payments to uniformed officials increase transport costs and hinder trade in West Africa. Such practices have long been decried and governments have often been called upon to act. Yet apart from sporadic demonstrations of anger by transporters, there has been little concrete pressure for drastic change. Meanwhile, the hidden nature of bribery has kept the issue in limbo, and the incidence of illegal taxes has been increasing. Clearly, in addition to the organizational and technical aspects of transport, traffic fluidity along interstate corridors is an important issue for governments to address.

To this end, the Improved Road Transport Governance (IRTG) initiative regularly monitors these illegal practices along interstate road corridors, prompting responsible authorities in that sector to take appropriate corrective measures.

IRTG regularly and impartially identifies, analyzes and publishes uniformed services' practices, irregularities and abuses noted by transporters on road corridors with defined criteria of performance and pertinent indicators.

The IRTG initiative is presently being piloted on the following corridors:

- Tema – Ouagadougou
- Lomé – Ouagadougou
- Bamako – Ouagadougou

This report summarizes the analysis of data collected May 27-October 26, 2007 and compares the results with those of the initial data-collection period of October 26, 2006-May 20, 2007.

The results detail:

- Number of check points
- Delays in minutes
- Bribes collected by uniformed services

II. Results of surveys, May 27-October 26, 2007

The following table summarizes data collected by transporters from May 27 to October 26, 2007.

Results of the Improved Road Transport Governance Initiative, May 27-October 26, 2007: Barriers, bribes, delays									
Corridor length (km)	Number of barriers on the corridor	Countries crossed	Distance in each country (km)	Number of check points		Bribes (in USD)		Uniformed services responsible	Delays per 100 km (minutes)
				By country	Per 100 km	By country	Per 100 km		
Priority Corridor Tema – Ouagadougou									
992	19	Ghana	808	13	1.6	23.03	2.85	D	50*
		Burkina	184	6	3.3	19.78	10.75	D G P	545**
Priority Corridor Ouagadougou – Bamako									
905	255	Burkina	488	7	1.6	33.86	8.12	D	10 (D)
		Mali	417	18	4.3	95.06	19.48	G P	26 (G P)
Priority Corridor Lomé – Ouagadougou									
1020	15	Togo	746	11	1.5	27.23	3.65	P G	8 (D)
		Burkina	274	4	1.5	14.14	5.16	D	6 (D)

Note: This table is based on the following exchange rate: US$1.00 = 470 FCFA = GHC 0.93.
D =Customs
G = Gendarmerie
P = Police
* One reason for the long delay is IRTG's strategy of encouraging drivers to abstain from paying bribes when at all possible – specifically by not getting out of their trucks to meet uniformed officials unless requested.
** Floods damaged a bridge in Burkina Faso, contributing to significant delays.

III. Interpretation of survey results, May 27-October 26, 2007

3.1 Number of check points

The above table shows the average number of stops per corridor and per country and provides ratios per 100 km.

Corridor Téma – Ouagadougou (992 km: 808 km in Ghana and 184 km in Burkina)

The data records 19 stops on average per trip, 13 in Ghana versus 6 in Burkina. On average, 3.3 stops are recorded every 100 km in the Burkina Faso, versus only 1.6 stops every 100 km in the Ghanaian section.

Corridor Ouagadougou – Bamako (905 km: 488 km in Burkina and 417 km in Mali)

The data records 25 stops on average per trip, 18 in Mali versus 7 in Burkina. Every 100 km, 4.3 stops are recorded in Mali, versus only 1.6 stops in Burkina Faso.

Corridor Lomé – Ouagadougou (1,020 km: 746 km in Togo and 274 km in Burkina)

This corridor has the fewest obstacles, with 15 stops on average per trip—11 in Togo and 4 in Burkina Faso. On average, 1.5 stops are recorded within every 100 km in both Burkina Faso and Togo.

Check points are staffed mainly by customs officers in Burkina Faso and Ghana, while the gendarmerie and police have more check points in Mali and Togo.

3.2 Bribes

The previous table shows the average amount paid in bribes, per corridor and country (in USD) and highlights the ratios per 100 km.

Corridor Téma – Ouagadougou (992 km: 808 km in Ghana and 184 km in Burkina)

Bribes came to USD 42.81 on average per trip, of which USD 23.03 was collected in Ghana, versus USD 19.78 in Burkina. On average, USD 2.85 was collected each 100 km in Ghanaian section, versus USD 10.75 in Burkina Faso.

Corridor Ouagadougou – Bamako (905 km: 488 km in Burkina and 417 km in Mali)

Bribes amounted to USD 128.92 on average per trip, of which USD 33.86 were collected in Burkina versus USD 95.06 in Mali. On average, uniformed services in Burkina Faso collected USD 8.12 per 100 km, versus USD 19.48 in Mali.

Corridor Lome – Ouagadougou (1,020 km: 746 km in Togo and 274 km in Burkina)

Bribes amounted to USD 41.37 on average per trip, of which USD 27.23 was collected in Togo versus USD 14.14 in Burkina. An average of USD 3.65 was illegally collected each 100 km by uniformed services in Togolese territory, versus USD 14.14 in Burkina Faso.

The gendarmerie and police took more bribes in Mali and Togo, and customs officers took the most bribes in Burkina Faso and Ghana.

3.3 Delays

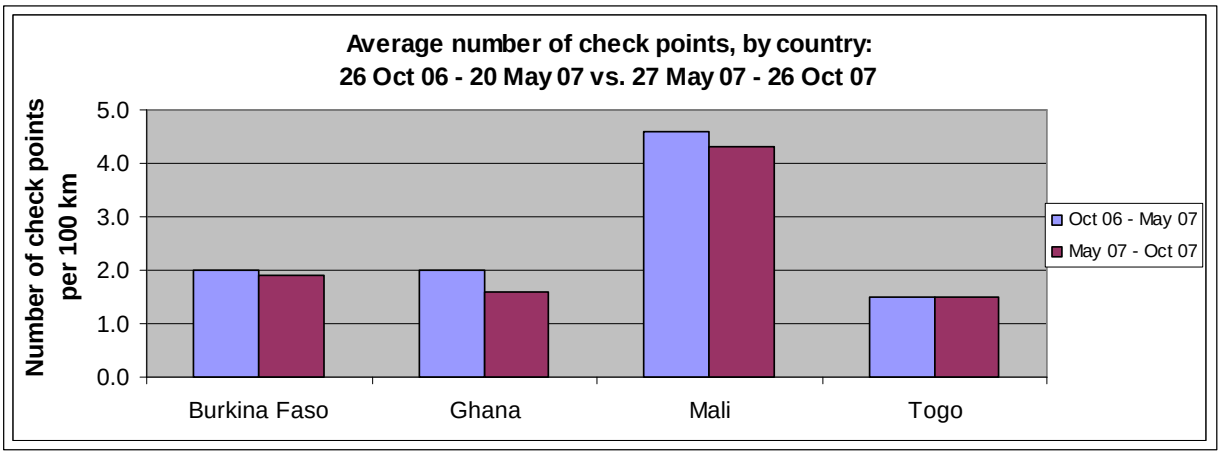
Data on delays caused by roadblocks revealed the following observations:

- In Mali, drivers experienced an average of 26 minutes delay per 100 km.
- Delays increased markedly in Burkina Faso: nearly 144 minutes on average per 100 km in the two corridors. However, these figures were undoubtedly affected by flooding and damage to a bridge along the route.
- Delays also increased in Ghana: 50 minutes lost per 100 km, per travel.
- Delays in Togo averaged 8 minutes per 100 km.

IV. Comparison of survey results, October 26, 2006 - May 20, 2007 & May 27 - October 26, 2007

4.1 Comparison of check points

Average Number of Check points					
Corridor	Per Trip			Per 100 km	
	Oct 26, 06 – May 20, 07	May 27, 07 – Oct 26 07		Oct 26, 06 – May 20, 07	May 27, 07 – Oct 26 07
Tema - Ouagadougou	**25**	**19**		**2.5**	**1.9**
Ghana	18	13		2.0	1.6
Burkina	7	6		4.0	3.3
Ouagadougou - Bamako	**24**	**26**		**2.7**	**2.8**
Burkina	5	7		1.0	1.6
Mali	19	18		4.6	4.3
Lomé - Ouagadougou	**18**	**15**		**1.8**	**1.5**
Togo	11	11		1.5	1.5
Burkina	7	4		2.5	1.5

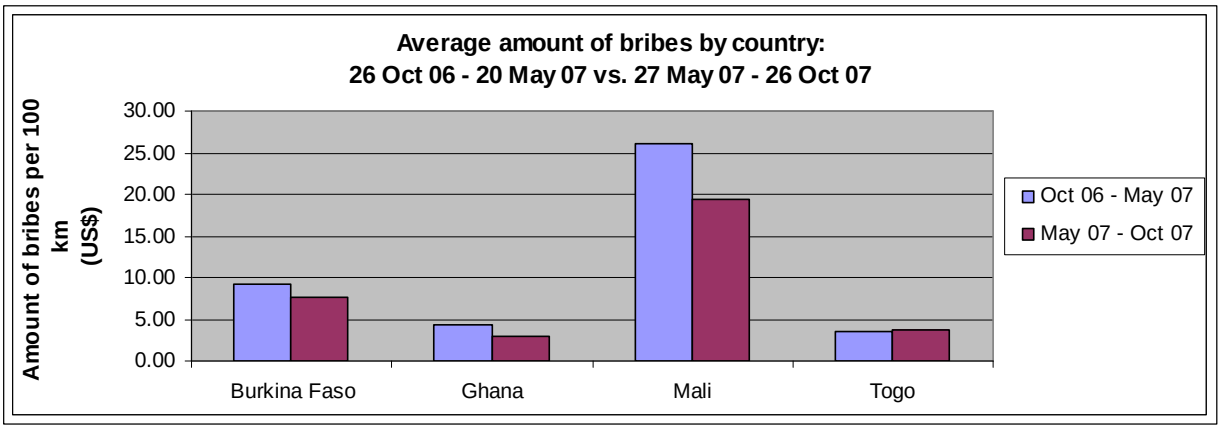


Observations:

- A slight decrease in the number of check points in Mali, from 4.6 to 4.3 per 100 km
- A tangible improvement in Ghana with a reduction from 2.0 to 1.6 stops per 100 km
- Burkina made improvements in two out of the three corridors monitored.
- Togo maintained status quo, with 1.5 stops per 100 km

4.2 *Change in bribes taken per trip, corridor and country crossed*

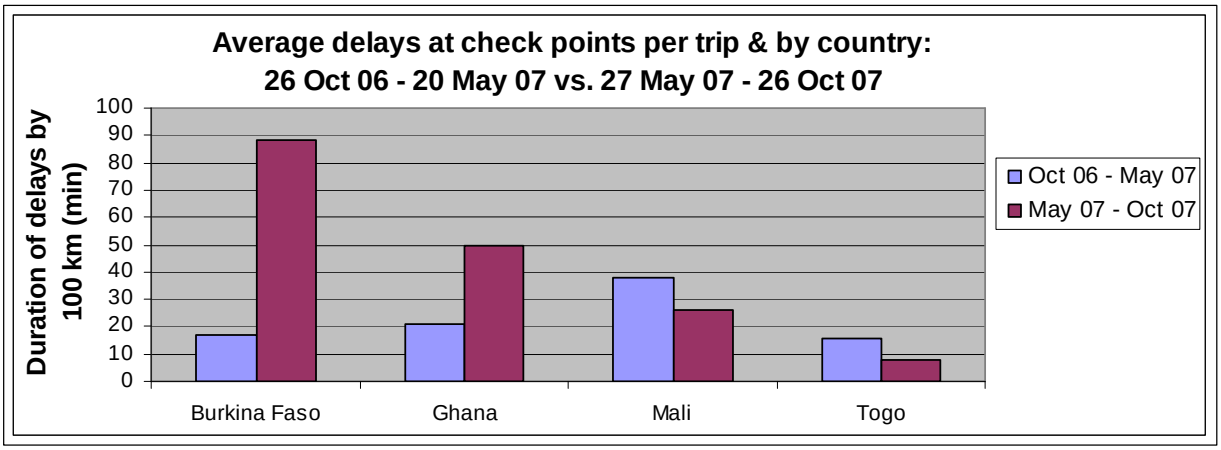
Bribes (USD)				
Corridor	Per Trip		Per 100 km	
	Oct 26, 06 – May 20, 07	May 27, 07 – Oct 26 07	Oct 26, 06 – May 20, 07	May 27, 07 – Oct 26 07
Tema – Ouagadougou	**56.14**	**42.81**	**5.66**	**4.31**
Ghana	35.18	23.03	4.35	2.85
Burkina	20.97	19.78	11.39	10.75
Ouagadougou - Bamako	**147.41**	**128.92**	**16.29**	**14.24**
Burkina	38.36	33.86	7.86	8.12
Mali	109.05	95.06	26.15	19.48
Lomé – Ouagadougou	**52.70**	**41.37**	**5.17**	**4.06**
Togo	25.92	27.23	3.47	3.65
Burkina	26.78	14.14	9.77	5.16



- A tangible reduction in bribes in Mali, from USD 26.15 to USD 19.48 per 100 km
- A significant reduction in bribes per trip, noted in Ghana, from USD 4.35 to USD 2.85 per 100 km
- A marked drop in the average amount of bribes paid in Burkina Faso, from USD 9.30 to USD 7.73 per 100 km on all three corridors. The Lomé – Ouagadougou corridor reported the most improvement, from USD 9.77 to USD 5.16 per 100 km
- Togo remained largely at status quo, as bribes rose slightly from USD 3.47 to USD 3.65 per 100 km.

4.3 *Change in delays per trip, per corridor and country crossed*

Delays per 100 km (minutes)		
Corridor	Oct 26, 06 – May 20, 07	May 27, 07 – Oct 26 07
Tema - Ouagadougou	**56**	**595**
Ghana	21	50
Burkina	35	545
Ouagadougou - Bamako	**53**	**36**
Burkina	15	10
Mali	38	26
Lomé - Ouagadougou	**38**	**14**
Togo	16	8
Burkina	22	6



Observations:

- Reduction of delays by half in Togo (from 16 to 8 minutes per 100 km)
- Decrease in delays by a third in Mali (from 38 to 26 minutes per 100 km).

Outside factors likely contributed to the large rise in delays in Ghana and Burkina Faso. Encouragement given to drivers by the IRTG team to not offer bribes – starting with not descending from their trucks automatically at check points – probably increased delays along the Tema – Ouagadougou corridor, particularly on the Ghanaian side. Drivers report that refusal to pay bribes, even when the vehicle and the cargo are in order, leads to longer delays more time is spent in discussion with uniformed services.

As indicated above, delays in Burkina Faso were increased by damage to a bridge at Pô.

To illustrate changes being made along trucking routes, please find an extract from an article published in the newspaper *L'Indépendant* in Burkina Faso, on August 28, 2007. Reporting like this is necessary to keep road corruption information in the public eye and maintain pressure to eradicate road corruption in this region.

Improvement in Burkina Faso, at the border with Ghana

In July 2007, a journalist from the weekly newspaper *L'Indépendant* in Burkina Faso recorded his observations while traveling in a truck from the capital Ouagadougou to the port city of Tema in Ghana. He noticed that the driver was surprised about changes made near the Ghanaian frontier.

(…) [T]he driver goes (…) to register his documents without paying a single cent. According to him, it is the first time this had happened to him. "The new customs boss said that from now on it would happen that way. Let us hope this lasts."

(…) The truck moved toward the border. He goes past a rope which serves as a road block for customs. "Things have really changed. Even here, we had to pay [USD 2.13] before the rope could be lifted."

In sum, the driver spent [USD 14.8], of which [USD 6.38] was illegal fees. He was lucky! If he had given [USD 21.28] to the agent OTRAF, [USD 2.13] to customs in Pô, [USD 12.77] to customs at Dakola, [USD 2.13] for the lifting of the rope at Dakola customs and [USD 2.13] at the town council road block, he would have spent – in addition to the [USD 14.89] – the sum of [USD 40.43].

Extracted from *L'Indépendant,* August 28, 2007.0