REPORT ON THE FIRST RESULTS OF THE IMPROVED ROAD-TRANSPORT GOVERNANCE (IRTG) INITIATIVE ON INTERSTATE HIGHWAYS

Introduction

Everybody knows that trucks are stopped on West African roads for bribes. However, less well known are details of the number of roadblocks on a given corridor, corridors with the highest number of barriers, total bribes paid and length of delays at those roadblocks, and who is responsible.

For several years, the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and the *Union Economique et Monétaire Ouest-Africaine* (UEMOA) have sought to quantify the situation without significant success. Now, however, ECOWAS and UEMOA have jointly set up the Improved Road-Transport Governance (IRTG) initiative on interstate roads, with the financial support of the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) through its West Africa Trade Hub/Accra (WATH/A), and of the Sub-Saharan African Transport Program financed principally by the World Bank. Together, the two organizations have defined the problem through a concept paper, developed a methodological approach and started work. A workshop to launch the first IRTG results in Ouagadougou in July 2007 provided the findings of the analysis of the first data. This report summarizes those findings.

Methodology

The methodology used follows certain principles:

- Strategy: start with the Tema – Ouagadougou corridor, steadily adding other corridors as means allow
- Period covered by the pilot survey collecting data analyzed here: October 26, 2006 – May 20, 2007
- Priority corridors selected by UEMOA and ECOWAS:
  - *Tema – Ouagadougou (Ouaga-Inter truck stop),* 992 km, including 808 km in Ghana and 184 km in Burkina Faso, over seven months and in both directions, with a preponderance of data covering the south-north direction
  - *Ouagadougou – Bamako (Faladié truck stop),* 905 km, including 488 km in Burkina Faso and 417 km in Mali, from April 1 – May 20, 2007 in both directions
  - *Lomé – Ouagadougou (Ouaga-Inter truck stop*), 1,020 km, including 746 km in Togo and 274 km in Burkina Faso, also from April 1 – May 20, 2007 in both directions, with a preponderance of data covering the south-north direction

Trained IRTG agents distribute data-collection sheets to drivers in ports (or inland ports). They choose only drivers with trucks in good condition (according to legal standards) and with paperwork in order. Their counterparts at the other end of the corridor collect the completed data-collection sheets from drivers completing their journeys. If the agents judge the data reliable, they computerize it and send it to the Information Technology Department of the UEMOA Commission for analysis.

Results

The table and map below show the results of the IRTG work from October 26, 2006 – May 20, 2007.

West African priority corridors for the IRTG pilot phase: barriers, bribes, delays and uniformed services responsible									
Corridor length (km)	Number of barriers	Country	Distance within each country (km)	Number of stops		Bribes (US$)		Uniformed services mostly responsible (bribes in US$ per 100 km)	Delays per 100 km(in minutes)
				By country	Per 100 km	By country	Per 100 km		
Lomé – Ouagadougou priority corridor									
1020	18	Togo	746	11	1.5	25	3	C (1.2) / G (1)	16
		Burkina	274	7	2.5	26	9	C (6.8)	22
Tema – Ouagadougou priority corridor									
992	25	Ghana	808	18	2.0	34	4	C (1.9) / P (1.7)	21
		Burkina	184	7	4.0	20	11	C (5.2)	35
Ouagadougou – Bamako priority corridor									
905	24	Burkina	488	5	1.0	37	8	C (3.7)	15
		Mali	417	19	4.6	105	25	P (11.5)	38

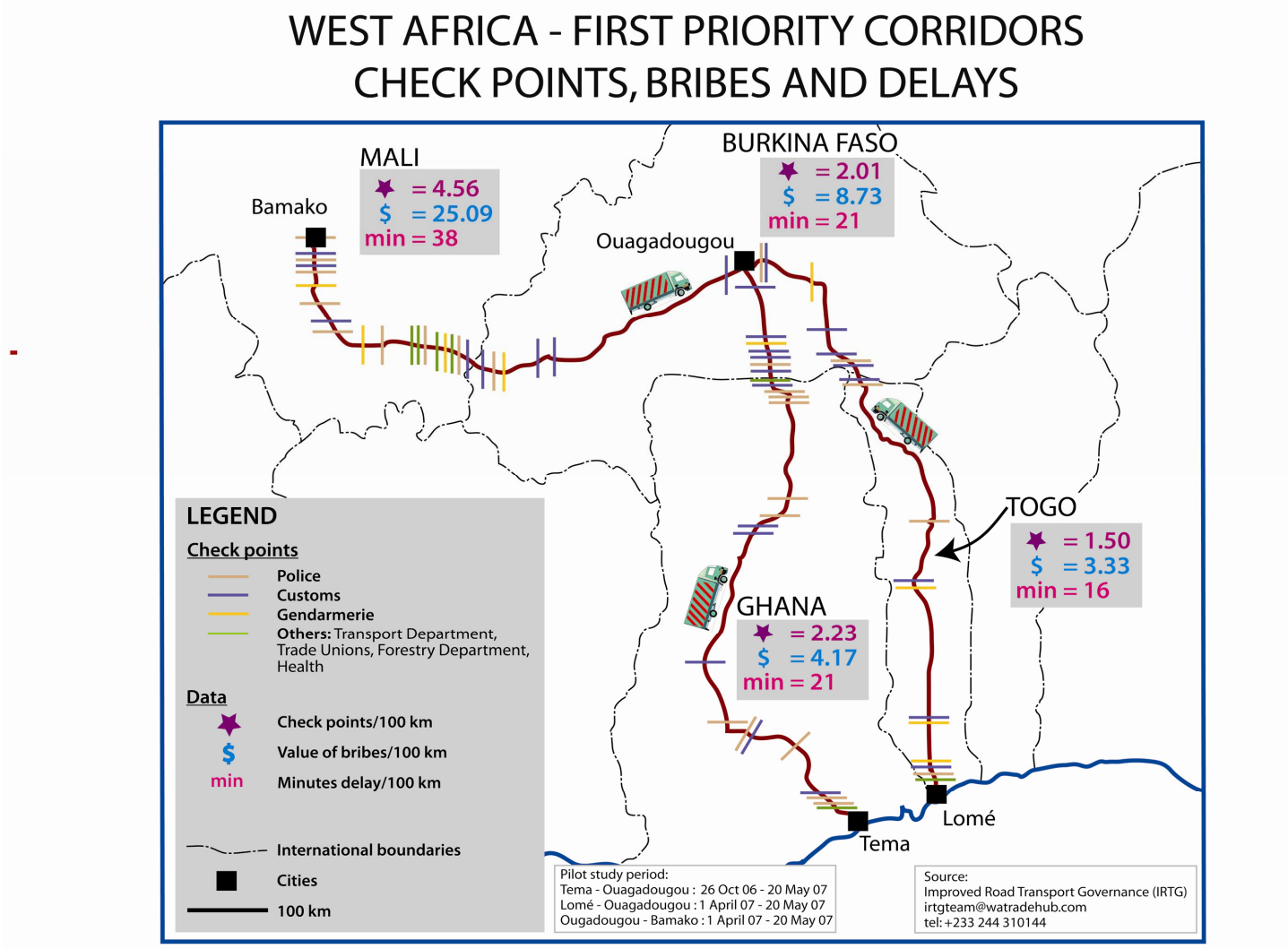
C = Customs
G = Gendarmerie (in Burkina Faso, Mali and Togo)
P = Police
Note: Exchange rates used are US$1.00 = 490 FCFA = ¢0.93.

Interpretation

Checkpoints
The table and map above indicate 24 checkpoints on the Ouagadougou – Bamako corridor, with 4.6 stops per 100 km in Mali, compared to only 1.0 stop per 100 km on the Burkina portion of the corridor. This corridor is more obstructed than the Tema – Ouagadougou corridor, and much more so than the Lomé – Ouagadougou corridor, which is the least obstructed (18 checkpoints in total, with 1.5 stops per 100 km on the 746 km-long Togolese portion). Further analysis shows that customs, followed by police, are responsible for most of the bribery in the countries surveyed.

Bribes
Consider the differences between countries in bribes paid per 100 kilometers. Togolese uniformed services take the least bribes ($3.33 or G¢3.10), followed by their Ghanaian counterparts ($4.17 or G¢3.88). In Burkina Faso the figures are $8.73 or G¢8.13. Mali's figures are the worst: $25.09 or G¢23.36. Regarding the uniformed services, the Malian police ($11.50 or G¢10.70) and the Burkina customs ($3.70 – $6.80 or G¢3.44 – G¢6.33, depending on the route) take the highest bribes.

Delays
Average delays per 100 km are highest in Mali (38 minutes), followed by Burkina Faso along the road from Ouagadougou to the border with Ghana (35 minutes). In contrast, the average delay in Togo is 16 minutes per 100 km.



IRTG in the future

IRTG reports similar to this one will appear quarterly, to provide regular updates.

UEMOA and ECOWAS propose that IRTG should carry out more detailed data collection at borders, extend its work into the ports, and start work on a fourth corridor in 2008: Cotonou–Niamey.