

WAMI



IMAO

**SIXTH MEETING OF COORDINATORS OF
NATIONAL SENSITISATION COMMITTEES
OF THE WEST AFRICAN MONETARY ZONE**

FINAL REPORT

CONAKRY, REPUBLIC OF GUINEA

JUNE 7, 2004

**REPORT OF THE SIXTH MEETING OF COORDINATORS OF
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I. INTRODUCTION

1. The sixth meeting of Coordinators of National Sensitisation Committees (NSCs) of the West African Monetary Zone (WAMZ) was held in Conakry, Republic of Guinea on June 7, 2004. The meeting was called to intimate Coordinators with WAMI's plans for sensitization in the WAMZ during January – July 2005, review the activities of the committees during 2004 and firm up arrangements for the Zonal Workshop on "The Role of the Mass Media in Promoting the West African Monetary Zone Programme", scheduled for Conakry, Republic of Guinea on June 8, 2004.

II. ATTENDANCE

2. The National Sensitisation Committees of The Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Nigeria and Sierra Leone were represented at the meeting, as well as WAMI staff. The list of participants is annexed to this report.

III. OPENING SESSION

3. Dr. Lanto Harding, of the Ministry of Regional Cooperation and NEPAD, Ghana; and outgoing Chairman of Coordinators of National Sensitisation Committees (NSCs) welcomed members to the meeting and thanked them for their cooperation during his tenure. He thanked the Guinean NSC for the excellent facilities put at the disposal of members and the warm welcome accorded delegates since their arrival in Conakry.

4. The Director General of WAMI, Dr. M. O. Ojo, thanked the Coordinators for their support and cooperation with WAMI in the implementation of the sensitisation

programme of the WAMZ. He noted that with barely 13 months to the establishment of the West African Central Bank (WACB) on July 1, 2005, and with the Headquarters in Accra, Republic of Ghana, the sensitisation programme has become a very crucial issue. He, therefore, implored the NSCs to intensify efforts by addressing campaign messages to every target group for the attainment of our common objective. He was optimistic on the financing of the sensitisation programme by member states and called on all the stakeholders to commence work on designing an agenda with an appropriate budgetary support for the implementation of the sensitisation activities during the final stage of the programme. He once again thanked the National Coordinators for their sustained cooperation, and in particular, for their support in identifying the media practitioners that have been helping in the sensitisation programme. He appealed to them to attend the following day's workshop on "The Role of the Media in Promoting the WAMZ Programme". In the light of this, WAMI and NSCs will have to make the media play an active role by providing it with adequate and accurate information on the WAMZ programme for effective dissemination of information to all the stakeholders.

IV. ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN

5. Mr. Seydouba Sylla, President NSC of Guinea was elected as Chairman of the meeting. He welcomed members to the meeting and reassured the meeting that all efforts would be made to intensify the sensitisation programme in Guinea, and across the Zone.

V. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

6. The meeting adopted the following Agenda:

- (i) Opening Ceremony
- (ii) Election of Chairperson
- (iii) Adoption of Agenda

- (iv) Presentation of theme for the Zonal Workshop – “The Role of the Mass Media in Promoting the West African Monetary Zone Programme”
- (v) Country Reports
- vi) Any Other Business
- vii) Adoption of Report
- viii) Closing

VI. CONSIDERATION OF THE AGENDA ITEMS

A. Presentation of Theme for the Zonal Workshop – “The Role of the Mass Media in Promoting the West African Monetary Zone Programme”

7. Dr. Alpha Diallo, the Director of Operations of WAMI presented the highlights of the workshop on the role of the mass media in promoting the West African Monetary Zone Programme, scheduled for June 8 2004. He indicated that there would be two plenary sessions during which papers will be presented on “The Challenges of Introducing the Eco Currency” and “Promoting the WAMZ Programme: The Role of the Mass Media”, followed by discussions. The afternoon session would be devoted to group discussions on the following themes: “Benefits and Costs of the WAMZ Programme”, “Disseminating Information to the Grassroots: Constraints and Challenges”; and “Modalities for Ensuring Effective Reporting on the Eco”. Each group will present a report with recommendations at the end of the deliberations.

B. WAMI/NSCs Sensitisation Initiative For 2005

8. WAMI intends to build on the successful collaboration with NSCs for sensitising the general public in member countries as the target date of July 1, 2005 approaches. To remain effective, WAMI and NSCs should constantly renew initiatives to respond to current situations. In this regard, the proposed joint efforts at sensitisation will focus on sending the message to all segments of the society in the

zone, as public interest in the WAMZ programme is expected to increase significantly in 2005.

9. To this end, WAMI will design a programme to be implemented between January and June 2005 that will enhance the knowledge of Coordinators as well as the public in member countries. It is important to apprise Coordinators early on this initiative so that WAMI and the NSCs will make available sufficient resources in their respective budgets for 2005. The sensitisation initiative by WAMI for January – July, 2005 is in collaboration with the NSCs of member countries.

C. Presentation of Country Reports

The Gambia

10. The Gambian NSC has been adequately funded in 2004. The sensitisation campaign has been carried to the provinces. A number of workshops have been planned, one of which is for the private sector which has been shifted from June to August 2004. Another important aspect of The Gambia's programme is a workshop in the provinces. The Gambian Television is assisting the committee with promotional video sensitisation on the Eco within the framework of agricultural sensitisation. Drama groups and musicians are also being organised on the monetary union and Eco. The live presentations are scheduled for November 2004. A forum for university students is also contemplated.

11. The Gambia's NSC has also been enlarged to include all relevant government institutions and private sector entities in order to widen the reach of the Committee. There are now 12 institutions on the NSC with The Gambia Chamber of Commerce providing the main link with the private sector. The Committee has also been strengthened with the inclusion of senior officials of the rank of Directors. Meanwhile, the radio programme of the NSC has been very effective, but owing to

loaded schedules of NSC members it could not hold weekly as expected. However, efforts are being made to make it more regular. The Gambia is working towards the hosting of the Zonal Workshop for civil servants in October 2004. The Chairman appealed to WAMI to assist the NSC with two resource persons for the workshop it has earmarked for August 2004. The Gambia NSC is to undertake a census on the impact of its sensitisation activities on the stakeholders sometime in August, 2004.

Ghana

12. The Chairman of Ghana's NSC expressed appreciation for the hospitality of the Government and people of Guinea since the arrival of the Ghanaian delegation. The Ghana NSC is undertaking the launching of the sensitisation programme in the 10 districts of Ghana. The Minister of Regional Cooperation and NEPAD of Ghana is involved in this endeavour. Posters have been produced while bill boards will soon be mounted across Ghana. Radio jingles have also been produced. Ghana has also embarked on a train the trainer programme to help in the massive sensitisation of the citizenry. A Sponsor's Forum is being used by Ghana to sensitise the financial sector and attract funding from it through advertisements and sponsorships. A media workshop is being planned. The parliamentarians are to be sensitised through a workshop on 24 – 25 June 2004. WAMI would be invited to facilitate at the workshop. The civil servants and state enterprises are also to be sensitised before end-September 2004

Guinea

13. Guinea has a plan of action for 2004. The NSC of Guinea has membership across all sectors of the economy, including parliamentarians. The draft sensitisation programme would be made available to members. Community radio stations, women and youth associations have been targeted by the NSC. The plan of action would be implemented from June 15, 2004 once the funds are made available to the NSC. Guinea's NSC is well disposed to the sensitisation of its citizens but it

would commence action swiftly in the next few months when a budget would have been approved for the NSC.

Nigeria

14. The sensitisation programme is well alive in Nigeria. The NSC of Nigeria has just been revitalised and a comprehensive package of sensitisation has been outlined. The Hon. Minister of Cooperation and Integration in Africa will personally head a nation wide tour of the country. Resource persons and discussants have been identified to facilitate at the workshops earmarked for 2004. Nigeria is a large country which requires adequate planning for effective sensitisation. Sensitisation activities have been outlined for the six geo-political zones of Nigeria and the Federal Capital Territory, Abuja. The NSC is to engage the services of public relations experts to help carry the message of the WAMZ to the nooks and corners of Nigeria. Nigeria organised a week long programme during the 29th Anniversary of ECOWAS at which the prospects of the introduction of the Eco were highlighted. The process for the presentation of the WAMZ Agreement and WACB Statute to the National Assembly has been initiated. The NSC would also use the structures of the National Orientation Agency (NAO) in the sensitisation of the people. The problem of official funding has been resolved but the NSC is exploring other sources of funding.

Sierra Leone

15. The training of trainers programme was undertaken by the NSC in Bo, Kenema and Makeni during the first quarter of 2004. The participants were journalists, pupils from tertiary institutions, civil servants, civil society and the media. One issue of concern is the undue harassment of passengers and traders across the borders. The suggested solution was proper sensitisation of the officials on the WAMZ programme. The participants, on completion of their training, designed their own programme to cater for the peculiar needs of their regions. The second activity

was the sensitisation of the communities in Freetown and the Western area. The Chairman of the three regions participated at the WAMZ meetings, held recently in Freetown, Sierra Leone. This was to further familiarise them with the WAMZ programme. Other activities have been lined up for the rest of 2004. These include sensitisation seminar for the financial sector and chambers of Commerce, civil servants, etc. The NSC has received adequate funding from Government. Essay competition has also been planned for schools in Sierra Leone. The funding in 2004 was more enhanced than in 2003. The NSC of Sierra Leone is building on its efforts in the previous years.

VII. Outcome of the Deliberations

(a) Presentation of Theme for Zonal Workshop on "The Role of the Mass Media in promoting WAMZ programme"

16. Delegates noted the presentation

(b) The Sensitisation Initiative for 2005

17. The proposed zonal sensitisation programme should be sent to the NSCs before the earlier scheduled date of October 2004, so that the financial implications could be taken care of in the 2005 budgets by the governments.

(C) Country Reports

18. Although The Gambia has outlined a number of activities for 2004, it appears a change of strategy would facilitate its activities. It was suggested that a train the trainer committee should be set up to ensure that the entire country could be sensitised within a short timeframe.

19. The meeting noted that although Nigeria has outlined a robust programme, the implementation should be stepped up. The lull in the sensitisation programme in Nigeria has affected the efforts of other member countries. However, the re-assurance by Nigeria would re-kindle the efforts of other countries.

20. The meeting agreed that the NSC of Sierra Leone has lived up to its expectation as a role model in the sensitisation programme of the WAMZ. Sierra Leone was urged to continue to play its leading role.

21. Each country should redouble efforts and make the necessary contacts to ensure that funds are allocated to NSCs activities.

22. WAMI should continue to provide technical and other logistics support to the NSCs.

VIII. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

23. Delegates were urged to be punctual at the workshop for the mass media holding on June 8 2004. This is to enable the registration exercise to be completed on time so that the workshop could commence as scheduled.

IX. VOTE OF THANKS

24. Alhaji Idris Kuta, Director, Nigeria's Ministry of Cooperation and Integration in Africa moved the vote of thanks. He thanked the NSC of Guinea for the excellent facilities put at the disposal of the Committee. He expressed the appreciation of delegates to the Government and people of Republic of Guinea for the warm and brotherly African hospitality extended to them since their arrival in Conakry. He

thanked the Director General of WAMI for effective facilitation of the zonal sensitisation programme.

X. ADOPTION OF THE REPORT

25. The report of the meeting was adopted.

XI. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

26. The next meeting of the Coordinators will come up in Banjul, The Gambia on October 26, 2004. The zonal workshop for the civil servants would be held the next day.

XII. CLOSING REMARKS

27. The Chairman, Mr. Seydouba Sylla, noted that, the NSCs have a lot more to do in ensuring that all the stakeholders take ownership of the WAMZ programme. He expressed appreciation for the effective participation of delegates at the deliberation of the Committee. He was confident that the zonal workshop coming up the following day would be a huge success. He thereafter declared the meeting closed.

**DONE IN CONAKRY
ON THE 7th DAY OF JUNE, 2004**

**Mr. Seydouba Sylla, President National
Sensitisation Committee (NSC) of Guinea;
And Chairman, Coordinators of National Sensitization
Committees of the West African Monetary Zone
(WAMZ)**