

A. RETROSPECTIVE

1. 35 years of museum service

The West African Museums Programme commonly called WAMP is an independent regional Non-Governmental Organisation whose mission is to contribute to the development of museums in West Africa through capacity building, the development of a network of museum professionals cutting across language and geographic barriers. It was created in 1982 in Abidjan under the initiative of the late Philip RAVENHILL who was the first Executive Director until 1987. That year, WAMPS Headquarters was transferred to Dakar and Dr. Claude Daniel ARDOUIN, former Director of the National Museum of Mali became its director. The Headquarters is relocated to Niamey (NIGER) from January, 2009 to may 2013.



In 1992, the West African Museums Project became a full-fledged Programme and in 1995 Dr Alexis Adande, Professor at the National University of Benin, succeeded Claude Ardouin. The transition from a project to a programme marked the expansion of WAMP's activities. Its current Executive Director, Dr Boureima Tiékoroni Diamitani, art historian, former Director of Burkina Faso Cultural Heritage came into office in May 2001.

Since its inception in 1982 as a project, WAMP has achieved remarkable recognition through assisting museums in West Africa. Cumulated results of the last twenty eight (28) years have had a great impact on museum professionals in West Africa. The successes of WAMP during these years include thirty seven (37) national projects and twenty (20) regional projects. WAMP is actively engaged in the publication of a series of annual bulletins, seminar activities and video recordings of WAMP projects. WAMP was the first African organisation based in Africa and specifically aimed at developing private, community, specialist and public museums in West Africa.

WAMP maintains relations with more than 200 museums of all the West Africa countries (Benin, Burkina, Cape Verde, Cote d'ivoire, The Gambia, Guinea, Guinea Bissau, Liberia, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Togo. Cameroon is also part of the WAMP countries of action. The organization also collaborates with museums and institutions outside these countries). WAMP is an active partner in African and cultural initiatives. WAMP has acquired a world reputation as a known institution, a leader in the system of assistance to West African museums and a worthy partner.

This is how the organisation has contributed to the establishment of dynamic networks and is today recognised as an instrument of regional integration as attested by its status as an observer in ECOWAS and its partnership with the African Union on cultural issues. It is an active partner in the continent's cultural initiatives. All its action in favour of museums and their professionals have been made possible by financial support from partners like FORD FOUNDATION, ROCKEFELLER FOUNDATION, SWEDISH INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT AGENCY (SIDA), GETTY FOUNDATION, UNESCO, OSIWA EUROPEAN UNION. Through its programmes, WAMP was able to develop advisory and expertise tools for different institutions and stakeholders; and updating the qualifications of professionals through conferences and workshops.

Advocacy and communication constitute the cornerstone of programmes and activities of the organisation. Since 1982, WAMP's activities have had an impact on the institutional development of West African museums by contributing to the clarification of their roles and improving their planning processes. Through advisory and technical assistance, WAMP has helped many institutions to improve and strengthen themselves. Some of them were young, while others were in decline.

The existence of a network of West African museum professionals has now become a reality and is contributing to the reduction of linguistic and geographical barriers between professionals in West Africa.

WAMP'S OTHER MAJOR ACTIVITIES AND ACHIEVEMENTS SINCE 1982

- The Small Grants Programme

This special programme was initiated in 1992, with the support of the Swedish International Development Agency (SIDA). The programme is dedicated to museums and similar institutions with grants from 2.500 to 15.000 US\$.

- Multinational programmes

Multinational programmes have been developed from workshops and through conferences, meetings and exchange among museum professionals. With the International Centre for the Study of the Preservation and Restoration of Cultural Property (ICCROM), WAMP organised regional workshops on preservation which led to the creation of the PREMA courses and the establishment of the Ecole du Patrimoine Africain (EPA).

As part of communication and information activities, WAMP launched a website (www.wamponline.org) and an information bulletin.

The following programmes have been implemented:

- Workshop on « Textile conservation, storage and exhibition » - Bamako, Mali, June 15 -July 10, 1984 (Bamako I) in collaboration with ICCROM;
- Workshop on Storage Organization, Dakar, 1989. Based on the storage reorganization effort at the Musée d'Art Africain de l'IFAN;
- Workshop for Museum Directors of Francophone sub-Saharan Countries; in collaboration with ICCROM, Niamey (1990) ;
- Regional workshop on "Museums and archaeology", Abidjan (1993);
- Regional workshop on. "Museums and history"; Ouidah (1995);
- Regional workshop "Museums and urban culture", Accra (1996);
- International seminar on " The conservation of photographic archives in West Africa" Sénégal, 1999;
- Regional seminar on " Institutional capacity building of West African museums", Sénégal, January 2000;
- Itinerant regional workshop on "The Public Face of Museums in West Africa", Benin, Togo, Ghana, 2001;

- International Workshop on “ The Legal and Institutional Status of Private and Community Museums in West Africa, Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso, 2002.
- Participation in international programmes
 - Partner in the PREMA programme of ICCROM;
 - Partner in the International Council of Museums (ICOM) for the organisation of ICOM workshops on « **What Museums for Africa? Heritage in the Future** ». **(Benin-Ghana-Togo, 18-23 November 1991)**
- Publications
 - The WAMP bulletin (bilingual French/English);
 - Directory of Museum Professionals in Africa, in collaboration with ICOM, 1993;
 - Museums and the Community in West Africa, 1995 (English);
 - Directory of Museums in West Africa, 2000 (French/English)
 - Directory of Photographic Archives in West Africa, 2001(French/English)
- Proceedings of regional workshops
 - Museums and Archaeology in West Africa, 1997;
 - Museums and History in West Africa, 1999;
 - Museums and Urban Culture, 2002;
 - A video cassette on WAMP: "12 years of museum development".

a. Relations with other institutions

WAMP has also developed active collaborative relationships with international institutions and museum related institutions and programmes outside West Africa as well as with intergovernmental cooperation agencies within and out of the West Africa sub region (AFRICOM, EPA, ICCROM, ICOM, SAMP, ACASA, etc...)

In Africa, institutions like l’Ecole du Patrimoine Africain (EPA) and AFRICOM as well as organisations like the African Union, ECOWAS and l’Union Monétaire Ouest Africaine (UEMOA), are privileged partners of WAMP

b. Funding

Since its inception, WAMP has been supported by the Ford Foundation with several subsidies which were granted for the implementation of its activities. Collaboration with the Rockefeller Foundation has made it possible to obtain great financial assistance since 1989. Besides these subsidies, the organization has succeeded in attracting funds for specific projects: support to the photographic library project of IFAN in Senegal by the Overseas Development Administration (ODA); the INEP photographic library project in Guinea Bissau that was financed by the Embassy of the United Kingdom, and the workshop in Jos, Nigeria that was sponsored by the Swedish International Development Agency (SIDA) and the USIS, etc.

2. WAMP today

a. Main interventions:

WAMP is an organization independent of any grouping or lobby. Its statutes prohibit it from any form of discrimination be it ethnic, linguistic, sexist, policy or denominational. For this reason, it intervenes as:

- An intellectual partner

WAMP associates itself with research aimed at finding solutions and new methods. WAMP collaborates with institutions rather than commissioning « experts » to « resolve » problems.

- A training partner
WAMP creates training opportunities and serves as a catalyst in disseminating information and experience.
- A facilitator for professional relations in West Africa
WAMP reduces the negative effects of political and linguistic barriers and establishes stable and sustainable relations.
- An intermediary in fundraising
WAMP identifies funding opportunities, allocates subsidies and offers counselling as much as possible for its institutional partners.

In this way, the organization builds solid partnerships with its agents and stakeholders based on mutual respect, commitment and real professional relations. To date, WAMP collaborates with more than 200 museums in seventeen (17) African countries and also works with NGOs, regional organizations (active partner in the African cultural initiatives in general, with the African Union, ECOWAS, and UEMOA), and with International agencies and opinion leaders in the promotion of museums. Its aims are:

- i. *To develop human resources through:*
 - Capacity building for museum personnel in order to meet the clearly defined institutional needs;
 - The promotion of new professional approaches and methods.
- ii. *To facilitate communication and professional exchanges through:*
 - The collection, analysis and dissemination of relevant information;
 - The improvement of access to information;
 - Support to professional relations in Africa and elsewhere.
- iii. *To provide service, technical assistance and programme development through:*
 - The provision of consultancy services, facilitation and implementation of activities for donors, museums and assimilated institutions;
 - The provision of technical assistance including support for the development of programmes and making available qualified resource persons as well as adequate equipment.
- iv. *To guarantee financial resources by :*
 - Mobilising funds through investment and income generating activities;
 - Supporting the financial autonomy of museums.

In its approach, WAMP gives special attention to genuine partnership relations in designing and implementing its programmes. Hence, WAMP defines the orientation of its programmes in two perspectives: ***To engage the long-term processes and to meet the short and medium term needs of museum professionals.***

b. Organisation and administration

The heads of statutory branches of WAMP's administration are:

- i. **The Board of Directors:**

The organization is headed by a Board of Directors of seven (7) members and most of them citizens of African countries. The Board of Directors is responsible for the implementation, follow-up and policy evaluation of the organization. The Board of Directors recruits the Executive Director and the senior technical experts, approves the positions of personnel and fixes salaries and employment conditions in accordance with the regulations in force.

The members of the Board of Directors are museum professionals, academicians and financial experts from various parts of the world who are named by their peers for a three-year mandate and re-eligible only once.

ii. Ad hoc Committees created by the Board of Directors;

The Board of Directors can set up Working Committees whenever necessary.

iii. The Secretariat :

The Executive Director and the employees constitute the Secretariat. The Executive Director is named to ensure the development, execution and follow-up of programmes. His/her mandate is for four (4) years and renewable once. For this reason, he/she is specifically responsible for:

- The elaboration and coordination of programmes for WAMP and ensuring their implementation;
- Developing a fundraising strategy for the implementation of WAMP's programmes;
- Preparing and implementing WAMP's annual budget;
- Coordinating and preparing WAMP's publications;
- Undertaking recruitment of staff of the Secretariat, except for some specific positions as stated in the manual of procedures and which are the prerogative of the Board of Directors;
- Managing the daily activities of the Secretariat;
- Organising the General Assemblies of the Board of Directors and preparing the narrative reports as well as WAMP's annual financial reports to be submitted to the Board of Directors and to donors;
- Informing the Board of Directors of the organisation about the operations of the secretariat.

iv. WAMP's present organizational chart

c. WAMP's institutional partners and beneficiaries of activities

i. Donors

They are the main financial partners of WAMP. They take part in the operational aspects of the organization and in financing the programmes and activities. They also co-finance programmes initiated by WAMP. The organization is responsible for writing specific reports for each financial donor and an overall report of activities undertaken each year.

ii. Museums, museum professionals, researchers, the public, governments

They are the beneficiaries of WAMP's activities. WAMP's cultural heritage and educational activities are more useful to the communities in which the museums and institutions are located.

iii. International NGOs, research institutions, etc.

They are WAMP's privileged partners and important actors of the organisation's network. WAMP cooperates with prominent institutions like the IAI, Smithsonian Institution, ICOM, UNESCO, etc, in order to benefit from their aura in the cultural world and to make WAMP a familiar name to professionals.

d. Financial resources

The organisation's financial resources comprise of:

- Financial support, grants, donations and contributions from sources approved by the Board of Directors;
- Income generated from the activities of the organisation including sale of publications and membership dues;
- Remunerations received for services rendered within the framework of contracts signed by the Executive Director and approved by the Chairman of the Board of Director.

Since its inception, WAMP has over the past 26 years benefited from generous contributions from its partners in order to finance its overhead costs and its programmes. They include:

- The Rockefeller Foundation;
- The Ford Foundation;
- The Swedish International Development Agency (SIDA);
- The Administration for Overseas Development (AOD);
- UNESCO;
- The Getty Grant Programme of the Jean-Paul Getty Foundation;
- The American government;
- European Union;
- Government of Burkina Faso;
- OSIWA.

e. Mission

The mission of WAMP is to contribute towards the development of museums in West Africa through capacity building and the development of a network of museum professionals by:

Developing human resources:

- Capacity building of museum personnel in order to meet the clearly defined and identified institutional need, and
- The promotion of new professional approaches and methods.

Facilitating communication and professional exchange:

- Collecting, analysing, synthesising and disseminating relevant information.
- Improving access to information.
- Supporting professional relations in West Africa, in Africa and elsewhere.

Providing service, technical assistance and development programmes:

- Providing consultancy services, facilitation, implementing services for donors, museums and assimilated institutions,
- Providing technical assistance including assistance in development programmes as well as the provision of qualified human resource personnel and appropriate equipment.

Guaranteeing financial resources:

- Mobilising funds through investment and income generating activities
- Supporting financial autonomy for museums.

f. Goal

- To act as a catalyst for the development of community, private or public museums in West Africa,
- To promote professional best practices in the museum sector and to encourage the establishment of new types of museums,
- To contribute towards striking a balance between museum programme activities and the needs of their communities,
- To support the efforts of local communities with a view to including them in the management, re-valorisation and preservation of their cultural heritage,
- To strengthen the network of museum professionals in West Africa and to integrate it at the continental and international levels, and
- To contribute positively towards the preservation and enrichment of African cultural heritages.

g. Areas of activity

WAMP's activities cover the whole of West Africa including Benin, Burkina, Cape Verde, Cote d'Ivoire, Gambia, Guinea, Guinea Bissau, Liberia, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone and Togo. Cameroon is also part of WAMP's partner countries.

WAMP can collaborate with museums and institutions beyond those in West Africa. Presently, the organization cooperates with more than two hundred (200) museums in West Africa as an active partner in important African and world cultural initiatives and has acquired a world reputation as an erudite institution, a leader in the assistance system for museums and as a true collaborator.

SMALL

GRANTS

PROGRAM

The Small Grants Program was initiated by the WAMP with the financial support of the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA). This program is intended to support innovative cultural projects with particular emphasis on reducing poverty, institutional capacity building in terms of financial autonomy and project management. This program also aims to encourage and involve local communities in actions to safeguard their cultural heritage.



Women working during WAMP funded batik training in Fouta, Northern Senegal, 2006
(Photo: WAMP)

Between 2003 and 2010, around 64 cultural projects in addition to 6 one-off support were financed. The beneficiaries came from just about all the WAMP countries. More than half of the grants went to community museums and private museums for the protection and promotion of cultural heritage. They were mainly aimed at revitalizing traditional crafts and developing capacities for income-generating activities to help combat poverty. Some of the grants were also intended to support reintegration projects for the benefit of young people, as well as women, the most marginalized and disadvantaged groups in society.

CONCLUSION

As the first African organization based in Africa and devoted to museum development, WAMP has pioneered the promotion of exchanges between African cultural heritage professionals and the creation of training opportunities in the museum field to make them more accessible.

The cumulative effect of 35 years in the service of African museums and cultural institutions has certainly had a positive impact in improving the conditions of operation of museums and the conservation of their collections.

Over time, the WAMP has adapted its vision and strategies to make museums more relevant to the needs of contemporary society, moving from a traditional ethnographic approach to museums and related institutions that place cultural heritage in community development, poverty alleviation, and conflict resolution.

B. INSTITUTIONAL DIAGNOSTIC

1. Strengths

WAMP had major achievements within the framework of its development process. These achievements can be strengthened because the organization has several assets which can serve as levers in the future and on which it can support its strategic choices. Its strengths include:

- WAMP is the first regional organization specialized in the development of museums in West Africa. The presence of the organization in the African continent gives it an

unquestionable advantage compared to other stakeholders who intervene in the field of museums in Africa but who are not "Africans".

- WAMP's members are recognized heritage professionals and the majority of them are Africans. Moreover, the presence of other members from other continents makes it possible to maintain a permanent interaction with the international community of professionals and other actors in the field. However, WAMP proudly maintains its African identity.
- WAMP develops interdisciplinary programmes and applies a « regional », rather than « country » "approach which cuts across linguistic barriers.
- For over 34 years, WAMP has been contributing towards the development of museums in Africa. This experience has made the organization the main actor in the field and gives it the know-how and a sharp knowledge of the questions concerning cultural heritage and museums of the continent.
- WAMP benefits from donor confidence because of its ability to manage its financial resources.

2. Weaknesses

- Current public relations capacity is weak at WAMP. WAMP does not develop enough communication channels with donors and organizations located outside the continent. The channels that are presently being used are slow and expensive with many programme constraints.
- The decision making process of the Board of Directors of WAMP is limited and inadequate. Some members of the Board of Directors do not promptly respond to important issues that are submitted to them;
- The insufficiency of administration staff leads to over-work for the programme officers and the Executive Director, who spend much of their time handling administrative issues related to the programmes instead of focusing entirely on their job.
- Donor funding received for implementation of programmes does not usually cover administrative costs.
- Inadequate human resources for the provision of counselling and expertise services.

3. Opportunities

- As a result of their vulnerability, museums in West Africa always need to be supported at different levels.
- A new emphasis on the social and economic role of museums for community development should enable the extension of WAMP's impact beyond museums to

intervene in the conservation and valorisation of cultural heritage in its entirety (material or immaterial).

- WAMP's status as an NGO makes it possible for it to design its programmes and projects in accordance with that status.
- WAMP can develop privileged relations with new partners that are interested in promoting the valorisation and preservation of heritage especially with African governments for which it will train personnel and improve national organisations.
- WAMP can introduce a system of financial contribution from those requesting training and from participants of its seminars and workshops, from governments, and assimilated institutions.

4. Risks

- A limited list of donors and insufficient resources lead to financial dependence. Moreover, the current economic crisis is likely to reduce the amount of funds available for museums.
- Communication problems and problems with the transfer of funds and materials create difficulties with programme management in West Africa.
- Failure to respect the timeframe for programme implementation by the professionals and institutions in West Africa is detrimental to WAMP's image and might in the long term discourage financial partners.
- Programme beneficiaries (professionals and institutions) do not disseminate the results of WAMP's workshops and training sessions widely to the public, thereby reducing its visibility and its impact. Present or potential beneficiaries of WAMP's programmes and activities see the organisation just as a financial donor.
- After having resolved their fundamental problems (conservation, documentation, dissemination, animation) through the assistance of WAMP, the beneficiaries often feel that they have attained the stage where they can apply directly to donors for funding instead of going through WAMP.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

As of May 2012, the Board of Directors was composed of:

Angele AGUIGA, Chairperson, University of Lome, Lome, Togo

Saliou MBAYE, Vice-Chair, UCAD, Senegal

Leonardo CARDOSO, Treasurer, Guinea Bissau

Anne Marie BOUTTIAUX, Member, Belgium

Ashaiye Ibiroike Pelumi, Member, Nigeria

Victor TIENDREBEOGO (Larle Naba), Member, Burkina Faso