



Press Release

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THE GIS FOR THE UNIVERSAL ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATIONS SERVICE IN GABON IS IN PLACE

The presentation meeting for the project "Creating an exhaustive list of localities eligible to receive the Universal Electronic Communications Service in Gabon" took place in Libreville on Friday 29 November 2019.

The consortium IGN FI / PROGRESYS/ INC presented the main results of the mission. Yvan GAUTHIER, project leader for IGN FI, said:

"The aim of the mission was to provide ARCEP with tools enabling it to carry out an inventory of network coverage in the country, and then to draw up a deployment strategy appropriate to the different forms of white zones identified. In order to achieve this, data were assembled from the telecommunications operators and various public administration bodies and then checked and validated by field surveys before being incorporated into a Geographic Information System enabling the analyses to be made."

The GIS allowed an inventory to be made of theoretical network coverage based on the position of operators' antennae, taking into account a variety of parameters such as antenna height, the technology (2G/3G/4G), frequency and environment (urban or rural).

This national coverage was then compared within the GIS with the data gathered in the field. In this way villages considered not to have coverage in the field study could be categorised as belonging, or not, to areas with theoretical coverage. This enables ARCEP (the Regulatory Authority for Electronic Communication and Postal Services) to adjust its strategy on a case by case basis (whether by negotiating with operators to extend their networks, choice of technology and the most appropriate types of extension, whether a purely Universal Service is required, etc).

The GIS also contains information on each village's population and shows whether each village has infrastructure for sanitation or education. This precious information allows priority cases to be identified when dealing with these issues.

Setting up the GIS within [ARCEP](#) has been supported by a training programme in using the tools and handling the data. This will enable officers to produce analyses and to programme and monitor deployment autonomously. ARCEP staff have also received training in updating the GIS data, with a view specifically to tracking the development of operators' networks.

Gabon wishes to provide access to basic electronic communication services to people in geographically remote areas who do not have access to telephone and internet. With a total surface area of 268,000 km² of which 85% is covered by forests, and a population of 1.8 million, mainly concentrated in the principal cities and along road and river routes, the provision of equal access to electronic communication represents a major challenge for the Gabonese government. Setting up this GIS provides a powerful tool to support decision-making for ARCEP and its institutional partners.

About the companies forming the consortium:

[IGN FI](#) is a leading player in the area of geomatics. It provides support to major overseas policy makers in the form of its expertise in the fields of cartography / infrastructure for national geographic data, databases and geographic information systems.

The primary role of the Gabonese National Institute of Cartography (INC) is to develop and carry out national cartographic programmes and to manage all cartographic documentation produced on the country. As such, the INC is responsible for meeting the needs of public, para-public and private sector organisations relating to cartography.

PROGRESYS is a management and technology consultancy dedicated to markets in sub-Saharan Africa. Its role is to provide support to its clients in delivering their transformation projects and ensuring success for their strategies. PROGRESYS provides services covering strategy, master plans for information systems, project management, change management, assisting contracting authorities, systems implementation and infrastructure.

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