

**Strengthened Networks of Regional Market Information Systems
and Traders' Organizations in West Africa (MISTOWA)**

Second Quarterly Report (January – March 2005)

Submitted to

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by



*An International Center for Soil Fertility
and Agricultural Development*

**P.O. Box 2040
Muscle Shoals, Alabama 35662, U.S.A.**

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List of Abbreviations and Acronyms

ADP	Agricultural Development Project
CTA	Technical Center for Agricultural and Rural Cooperation
DMDA	Dawanau Market Development Association
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
EU	European Union
FACIA	Federation of African Agricultural Input Trade Associations
FEWSNET	Famine Early Warning Systems Network
GAPTO	Ghana Agricultural Products and Traders Organization
GIS	Geographic Information System
GSB	Ghana Standards Board
GSM	Global System for Mobile Communications
IDRC	International Development Research Center
IFDC	An International Center for Soil Fertility and Agricultural Development
MIR	Marketing Inputs Regionally
MIS	Market Information Systems
MISTOWA	Strengthened Networks of Market Information Systems and Traders' Organizations in West Africa
MOFA	Ministry for Food and Agriculture
NAMIS	Nigeria Agri Marketing Information Service
OMA	Observatoire des Marchés Agricoles (Observatory of Agriculture Markets)
OSS	Open Source Software
PCU	Project Coordinating Unit
PIR	Project Intermediate Result
PO	Producer Organization
RECAO	Réseau des Chambres d'Agriculture de l'Afrique de l'Ouest (Network of Chambers of Agriculture of West Africa)
RESIMAO	Réseau des Systèmes d'Information de Marché d'Afrique de l'Ouest (Network of Market Information Systems of West Africa)
ROESAO	Réseau des Opérateurs Economiques du Secteur Agro-Alimentaire (Network of Economic Operators in the Food Industry)
ROPFA	Réseau des Organisations Paysannes et des Producteurs Agricoles de l'Afrique de l'Ouest (Network of Farmers' Organizations and Agricultural Producers of West Africa)
SMS	Short Messaging System
TA	Traders' Association
TO	Trade Organization

USAID	United States Agency for International Development
USDA	United States Department of Agriculture
WAEMU	West African Economic and Monetary Union
WAEN	West African Enterprise Network
WAG	The West African Agricultural Trade portal (Short name for the MISTOWA Resource Center)
WARP	West African Regional Program
WATH	West African Trade Hub
ZADI	German Center for Documentation and Information in Agriculture

**Strengthened Networks of Regional Market Information Systems
and Traders' Organizations in West Africa (MISTOWA)
Second Quarterly Report (January - March 2005)**

1. Introduction

USAID/WARP awarded IFDC a \$14.4 million cooperative agreement in late August 2004 to implement a 4-year project (MISTOWA) to strengthen the market information system (MIS) and trade organizations (TO) in West Africa (WA). The project aims to increase regional agricultural trade and food security by improving and linking the existing regional efforts to generate, disseminate, and make commercial use of market information.

MISTOWA works in four key areas to:

- Strengthen and link regional MIS so they perform more effectively and are more easily accessible by traders and producers. Integrate private systems and develop value-added commercial market information services.
- Increase the effectiveness and number of regional trader and producer organizations to enable them to become vectors for technology change, commodity chain development, and policy reform advocates.
- Address crosscutting issues that can improve trade (grades, standards, and reliable data) and welfare (HIV/AIDS, gender issues, and natural resource management).
- Focus on assisting Nigeria, the largest economy in West Africa, to develop MIS and trade associations, and to be more productively linked to the rest of the region in agricultural trade.

The project will concentrate its support for and through key public and private regional organizations on selected commodities and countries with the greatest potential impact on intra-regional trade, food security, economic and social impact, and exports.

The main regional partners include ECOWAS, WAEMU, ROPPA, RESIMAO, RECAO, ROESAO, FACIA, WABNET, and WAEN, all of whom have formal agreements with IFDC and have developed MISTOWA-related partner-project implementation plans. In addition, the project is collaborating with CILSS and FEWSNET on food security issues. The project is also working with selected national organizations such as OMA in Mali, GAPTO in Ghana, and with private MIS such as BusyLab in Ghana.

Using market and impact multiplier criteria, the team determined a first list of commodities that could be candidates for the focus of project activities. The stakeholders in the region during the national workshops were then consulted on the final selection. The project will initially center its work program on: (a) dual purpose (trade and food security) commodities—maize, rice, cassava, onions, tomatoes, and cattle; and (b) traded products—cashew nuts, shea nuts/butter, and fertilizer. A second group will be added after the system is progressing, and will include fish, mangoes, red meat, sesame, and cowpeas.

Working through regional organizations, the project will initially focus on the national partners and the noted commodities in Nigeria, Mali, Ghana, Senegal, Burkina Faso, and Benin. As resources and opportunities permit, and in the context of the commodity categories, the project will work with as many of the other ECOWAS countries as possible.

This report covers the period, January to March 2005, and is the second formal quarterly project report. It is presented by project implementation activities for the 4 Project Intermediate Results. An annex details project-related travels and other relevant materials.

2. Activity Overview

Major activities accomplished in the project's second quarter included the official regional launching of MISTOWA in Accra, a special launching in Nigeria, a Regional Crop Outlook Conference in Mali and an International Agricultural Trade Show in Senegal. Data collection and analysis for the establishment of benchmark indicator values for the monitoring and evaluation plan continued during the quarter. Application for equipment grants totaling \$1.7 million were received from project partners and collaborators. The

project's website <www.mistowa.org> and resource center portal <www.wa-agritrade.net> were created and launched. The third issue of the MISTOWA Newsletter was distributed to over 2000 people on the mailing list.

Project Management and Administration

Newly recruited MISTOWA staff started operating from IFDC offices in Benin and Burkina Faso and from the IDRC office in Senegal. Staff for the Traders' Organizations Coordinator position in Mali and for trade associations in Northern Nigeria were recruited and will begin operations in April. MISTOWA discussed collaboration with USDA (for Grades and Standards), CTA (for technical MIS training) and with IITA (for cassava, rice and cowpea supply chain development in Nigeria). The project continued to attract interest both at the national and regional levels following the good media coverage it received during its launching. Several visitors were received during the quarter. Staff and consultants traveled extensively within the region and the sustained travel improved MISTOWA's visibility and better understanding of its goals and objectives.

PIR 1. Increased Efficiency of Regional MIS

The project's website <www.mistowa.org> and regional trade portal <www.wa-agritrade.net> were officially launched. They will serve as websites for project news and events, and as portal for regional agricultural trade information, respectively. The project assisted RESIMAO to launch a web-based platform <www.resimao.org> which will facilitate the integration and management of data from the national MIS at the West African level. Several related training sessions were conducted for the managers of the national MIS systems to be able to upload and transmit data to the regional database.

PIR 2. Improved Capacities of Regional Trader and Producer Organizations

MISTOWA continued to support the regional trader and producer organizations and their national affiliates to improve their organizational and operational capacities. Specific activities included a ROESAO organizational management meeting in Bamako (14 and 15th March). At the national level, CONOESAM, the Malian national affiliate of ROESAO also held a 3-day meeting to take stock of their five years' existence and to draw an action plan to

rejuvenate the network. In Ghana, the Ghana Agricultural Input and Dealers Association (GAIDA) were trained in the proper and safe usage of agrochemicals. They also received training in and record keeping to improve the level of documentation of trade turnovers and commodity flows. Producer and Trader Organization members benefited from live demonstrations of the project portal <www.wa-agritrade.net> and were assisted to browse the site for information to increase trade.

PIR 3. Improved West African Trade Environment

The project provided the opportunity for traders to meet and make trade deals through organizing a regional crops outlook conference, a trade tour, and an International Agricultural Trade Fair. MISTOWA collaborated with CILSS to co-organize the 6th regional crop outlook conference attended by 180 participants from the 15 ECOWAS countries plus Mauritania, Chad and Cameroon in attendance. An entire day was dedicated to the development of business deals.

It also co-sponsored a 5-day trade tour with the MaliTrade project for seven members of the Ghana Agricultural Producers and Traders' Organization (GAPTO) to explore business opportunities with their counterparts in Mali. The delegation had discussions with producers' and traders' organizations and also visited markets in Bamako, Segou, Niono and Sikasso. The delegation was particularly interested in mangoes, potatoes, tomatoes, rice, live cattle and red meat from Mali.

Thirty participants were supported by the project to participate in the 6th edition of the annual International Agricultural Trade Fair (FIARA) in Senegal. The participants mounted exhibits of their products, made sales and other business contacts at the fair.

PIR 4. Nigeria

Project activities intensified in Nigeria with the official launching on 3rd March 2005. The event was co-organized with ECOWAS and witnessed by 100 stakeholders and partners from international, regional and national institutions and organizations. The USAID project CTO and the COP visited the famous Lagos Mile 12 market and had discussions with the grains, gari and perishable products associations. The market handles over 10,000 tons of food staples on a daily basis and serves urban consumers in and around Lagos as well as

neighboring countries such as Benin and Togo. Representatives of the national market information system (NAMIS) and of producers and traders organizations were supported to participate in training workshops and conferences at the West African level with the view to integrating Nigeria into the regional system.

3. Activities Accomplished in the Second Quarter (January – March 2005)

Activities accomplished during the quarter are reported by Project Intermediate Results (PIRs) and those related to management, administration and other cross-cutting issues are reported in the section “Project Management and Administration.” Attachments include details of travel and other activities.

PIR 1. Increased Efficiency of Regional MIS

PIR 1.1. Effectiveness of Existing and New MIS Improved

The project introduced its website <www.mistowa.org> and regional trade portal <www.wa-agritrade.net> as part of the activities of the official launching of MISTOWA in Accra, Ghana on 10 February 2005.

The MISTOWA IT team with the support of 2 Geekcorps volunteers developed the project website. It provides general information about the project activities and current news on trade, agriculture and other sectors of the national and regional economies. Partner activities are highlighted and project-related documents, files and the project newsletter are available for downloading by the public.

The regional trade portal is an internet server that stores, manages and distributes market and trade information. It is a one-stop access point for traders, producers and other stakeholders, and its purpose is to enhance intra-regional trade in agricultural products and inputs. The trade portal is developed by a private ICT company, BusyLab in Accra, and is based on a similar portal used in Uganda and Honduras. The contents include a “regional page” and country-specific pages for Benin, Burkina Faso, Côte d’Ivoire, Ghana, Guinea, Mali, Niger, Nigeria, Togo and Senegal. At both regional and country levels, there is information on commodities, traders’ and producers’ contacts, prices, offers to sell and bid to

buy, news and events and a library. Registered private or public sector users would be able to post and manage online prices, offers, news, and contacts. Usage statistics shows 14,290 hits during the second quarter (Table 1).

Table 1: Usage Statistics of www.wa-agritrade.net , January to March, 2005

Site Usage					
<i>Months</i>	<i>Hits</i>	<i>Sites</i>	<i>KBytes</i>	<i>Visits</i>	<i>Pages</i>
January	10	2	3	0	0
February	6,587	54	66,014	143	3,257
March	7,693	101	85,361	332	3,419
TOTAL	14,290	157	151,378	475	6,676
Types of Information					
<i>Months</i>	<i>Price</i>	<i>Contacts</i>	<i>Products</i>	<i>News</i>	<i>Library</i>
February	51%	7%	14%	23%	6%
March	54%	10%	15%	15%	7%

Source: Tracked by Tradenet.biz

PIR 1.2. National MIS Better Linked to Improve Information Dissemination

In order to make market information largely available at the regional level on-line and in a timely manner, the 8 national MIS forming the RESIMAO (Benin, Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, Guinea, Mali, Niger, Senegal and Togo) developed a road-map to transmit weekly data electronically to a regional database. This was made possible through technical assistance from MISTOWA, ZADI and CTA to set up a website and regional database, www.resimao.org. A first version was presented at the 6th Regional Crop Outlook Conference in Mali in March. The database consists of 34 commodities (including commodities of focus in MISTOWA) on which weekly market information is collected from 48 markets in 10 countries constituting the “regional market” (Table 2).

Table 2: Sources of market information for the RESIMAO regional database

Country	National MIS	Total Number of markets followed	Number of markets selected for monitoring	Composition of the “regional market” composed of markets selected for monitoring
Benin	ONASA	64	2	Cotonou/Dantokpa, Malanville
Burkina Faso	SONAGESS	48	4	Ouagadougou, Bobo Dioulasso, Ouahigouya,. Pouyentenga
Côte d’Ivoire	OCPV	20	8	Abidjan (3), San Pedro, Dalao, Yamoussoukro, Abengourou, Bondou
Guinea	SIPAG	50	6	Canakry (2), Kankan, Labé, Nzérékore, Boke
Ghana	SRID	80	4	Accra/Agbogbloshie, Techiman, Tamale, Mankessim
Mali	OMA	77	6	Bmako, Kayes, Sikasso, Gao
Niger	SIMA	58	4	Niamey, Maradi, Zinder, Galmi
Nigeria	NAMIS	10	5	Kano/Dawanau, Bauchi, Oyo, FCT, Niger
Senegal	SIM/CSA	47	4	Dakar, Tambacounda, Diaobé, Bakel
Togo	OSAT	26	5	Lomé, Anie, Ketao, Gando, Cinkanse
TOTAL		480	48	

The database system allows direct (online access to registered field enumerators) and indirect (through excel sheets received from national or district data managers) uploading of price information.

A RESIMAO ICT team (composed of national MIS IT managers) will implement the detailed action plan designed for the 6 next months, using an extranet (www.phprojekt.org) to work remotely and receive instant online assistance from ZADI and MISTOWA. Key activities include the harmonization of data collection sheets and methodology, automated exchange of data between the RESIMAO and the WAG database, and development of SMS functionalities for data input and dissemination.

MISTOWA and CTA once again pooled resources and co-organized a training workshop for MIS managers and IT specialist from the 10th to the 13th March 2005 in Bamako, Mali. The 24 participants came from Benin, Burkina Faso, Ivory Coast, Guinea, Mali, Niger, Senegal and Togo, including the communication and information officers from CILSS, ROESAO, RECAO, FACIA and ROPPA.

The training consisted of classroom presentations, working group sessions, offline and online demonstrations of the web-based RESIMAO platform [www.resimao.org]

PIR 2. Improved Capacities of Regional Trader and Producer Organizations

PIR 2.1. Organizational Capacities of TOs and POs Improved

MISTOWA continued to support the regional trader and producer organizations and their national affiliates to improve their organizational and operational capacities. A major activity initiated during the quarter was to make an inventory of the association's membership, activities and areas in which their capacities could be strengthened. A simple questionnaire was designed to that effect and pre-tested with ROESAO members during the organizational management meeting that preceded the regional crops outlook conference. The questionnaires would be administered in all the six focus countries during the next quarter. At the national level, 30 representatives of CONOESAM from the 10 regions of Mali took stock of their five years' existence and drew an action plan to rejuvenate the association. The plan includes renewing the management board and modifying the status and bye-laws of the association.

In addition to improving organizational and operational capacities, the project provided support for enhancing the technical and management capacities of producer and trader organizations. In Ghana, fifty three members of the Ghana Agricultural Input Dealers' Association (GAIDA) including 8 females received a 5-day training to improve their technical skills in agro-chemicals use and general record keeping skills. The training was co-sponsored by CropLife Africa & Middle East, and two IFDC projects (MIR and MISTOWA). The first two days of the training were used to improve skills in crop protection, safe handling, dosage and the identification of genuine products. The next two days were dedicated to refreshing the memory and further strengthening the training skills of 12 members who were trained earlier. On the final day, the participants were trained in book and record keeping and the usefulness of documenting transactions on a regular basis.

PIR 2.2. Improved Access to Market, Trade, and Production Technology Information

Activities performed included training producers and traders to use the WAG for access to market, trade, and production technology information. After the WAG launching in Accra and Abuja in February and March respectively, MISTOWA staff in the field offices continued to train producers and traders on how to use the site for information on prices, contacts and other news items. MISTOWA began publishing a monthly newsletter in January to inform stakeholders about project activities as well as pertinent information on markets and trade. Over 2000 people receive the newsletter, which is also available for downloading on the project website.

The project also provided opportunities for traders to meet and make trade deals through organizing a regional crops outlook conference, a trade tour, and an International Agricultural Trade Fair.

MISTOWA collaborated with CILSS to co-organize the 6th regional crop outlook conference attended by 180 participants from the 15 ECOWAS countries plus Mauritania, Chad and Cameroon in attendance. The project sponsored 40 producers and traders to the event. The country representatives presented their country's agricultural and food situations and projected their effects on price trends. The analysis showed decreasing trends in food production at the regional level in general, and possible shortages are predicted for Mali, Mauritania, Chad and Niger.

A special business session was held on March 17 at the outlook conference in which more than 50 traders and producers from 17 countries presented offers to supply and bids to buy agricultural products. A total of 112 offers were listed ranging from offers from Burkina Faso to sell cattle on the hoof to offers to supply sorghum and maize from Nigeria and yams from Ivory Coast (Table 3)

Table 3: Examples of offers made during the business session of the Crop Outlook Conference, Bamako, Mali March 17 2005.

Country	Commodity offered	Quantity	Offer price
Benin	Cashew	1,000 tons	350,000 CFA/ton
Burkina Faso	Bull (above 300 kg)	500 units	850 CFA/kg
Ivory Coast	Yam	40,000 tons	125,000 CFA/ton
Ghana	Onions	4,000 tons	Price on request
Nigeria	Sprghum	42,000 tons	Price on request

During the quarter, MISTOWA co-sponsored a 5-day trade tour with the USAID funded MaliTrade project in Mali. Seven members of the Ghana Agricultural Producers and Traders' Organization (GAPTO) were sponsored to explore business opportunities with their counterparts in Mali from the 14th to 19th March 2005. The delegation was hosted by CONOESAM, the Malian affiliate of ROESAO. They had discussions with producers' and traders' organizations and also visited markets in Bamako, Segou, Niono and Sikasso. The delegation was particularly interested in mangoes, potatoes, tomatoes, rice, live cattle and red meat from Mali. Business contacts were made which will hopefully improve trade between Mali and Ghana.

The project supported thirty members of producer and trader organizations to participate in the 6th edition of the annual International Agricultural Trade Fair (FIARA) from the 24th to 31st March 2005 in Dakar, Senegal. The event was organized by the National Council for Rural Consultation and Cooperation (CNCR) in collaboration with West Africa Network of Farmers' Organizations (ROPPA). The participants mounted exhibits of their products, made sales and other

business contacts at the fair. Mr Assane Sambo, a member of the traders association in Niger and one of the sponsored participants exhibited a special breed of bulls and sheep that he had painstakingly developed through several years of genetic research and experimentation. He was able to sell all the 10 bulls and



30 sheep worth about CFA 2m (\$4000) and took orders from several potential buyers. The MISTOWA project brings information and similar opportunities that traders are normally not

aware of to their doorsteps and facilitates the flow of agricultural products between markets for increased trade and improved food security within the West African sub-region.

PIR 2.3. Improved Advocacy and Negotiation Skills of POs and TOs

In collaboration with the MIR project, MISTOWA supported the executive members of the GAIDA to hold a planning meeting to develop a strategy to lobby for the enactment of the relevant bills and laws related to the sale of fake agro-chemicals in Ghana. The meeting culminated in a plan to hold two one-day events in April and May to sensitize the public on the need to eliminate fake products from the system. The first workshop will be technical in nature followed by a workshop of stakeholders (association wide) to sensitize them on the need for action and the role the association should play.

The harmonization of national agricultural inputs regulatory frameworks continues to be a major preoccupation of ECOWAS and WAEMU. During the quarter, IFDC collaborated with the African Federation of Seed Trade Associations (AFSTA), the FAO and the West African Seed Network (WASNET) to harmonize the national seed regulatory frameworks. The process has reached an advanced stage of implementation at the regional level and will be followed by a consultative meeting in April to develop a similar strategy and road map for harmonizing crop protection products regulatory systems in West Africa.

PIR 3. Improved West African Trade Environment

PIR 3.1. General and Specific Constraints to Trade, Issues of Grades, and Standards Addressed

The main issues to be addressed in the sub-PIR include policy and regulatory issues, institutional problems (lack of appropriate quality control and enforcement systems), measurement problems (absence of weights, grades and standards in most products).

The project assisted the Ghana Agricultural Producers and Traders organization (GAPTO) plan the promotion of the use of standard weights and measures for trading at the retail level. Market women trading in cereals and other grains in the Agboghloshie and Nima markets in Accra and in the central markets in Kumasi and Tamale will be provided

weighing scales and trained on their use. The training will emphasize the importance of standard weights and measures for domestic and regional trade and in particular to demonstrate that scales are more universal and less cumbersome to use than the “Olonka” and other local units of measure currently in use by traders in Ghana.

A series of promotional adverts were produced during the quarter and will go on radio and TV in April/May 2005 to inform and sensitize the public and solicit their cooperation in this exercise. The project will be officially launched by the Minister of Food and Agriculture together with the implementing partners. GAPTO, together with the implementing partners would monitor project progress for 6 months and organize a national seminar/workshop to review the results for a possible expanded phase.

MISTOWA concluded discussions with the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) to undertake assessments in a few countries covered by MISTOWA in the next quarter. The objective is to help develop a plan for assisting MISTOWA to raise awareness of the problems and opportunities for harmonizing standards in agricultural product trade and to identify options to equip producers and supply chains to respond to market-driven grades and standard issues.

PIR 3.2. Better Intra-Regional Trade Data in Key Commodities Available

Data on trade flows of agricultural commodities are generally considered to be the least accurate and reliable of all policy making statistics in West Africa. They are scattered among different government agencies and private sector organizations and neither systematically collected nor disseminated by a single agency. Trade data is at best a guess and it is a challenge for MISTOWA to facilitate the process of accurate trade data tracking and documentation. MISTOWA worked with project partners (producer and trader organizations members) to self-report data on trade for the commodities followed by the project. The project developed trade data reporting formats, survey questionnaires and trained partners on how to keep records of transactions of the MISTOWA commodities at the associations' level. .

During the quarter, MISTOWA worked with trader



organizations to establish benchmark trade values for the different commodities. An example was in Ghana where GAPTO, a ROESAO affiliate helped the project to collect trade data on onion imports from Niger in 2004. This consisted of extracting monthly information on volume and value of onions from the waybills accompanying the merchandize at the entry points into the country. In the year 2004, GAPTO imported 8,361 tons of onion for a declared CIF value of Cedis 14 billion (\$1,653,849) as detailed in Table4.

Table 4: Volume and Value of Onions imported by GAPTO from Niger, 2004

Month	Total Volume (kg)	Total value (Ghana cedis)
January	736,020	1,252,386,221
February	783,120	1,258,753,252
March	762,720	1,334,219,067
April	700,560	1,211,995,421
May	684,960	1,233,128,571
June	656,760	1,200,716,700
July	674,640	1,266,884,224
August	660,480	1,239,174,456
September	689,760	1,247,342,043
October	641,400	1,132,327,732
November	644,520	1,150,840,127
December	725,760	1,359,526,170
TOTAL for 2004	8,360,700	14,886,293,984

PIR 3.3. Cross-Cutting Issues (HIV/AIDS, Gender, and Environment) Addressed

The MISTOWA team will renew its contacts in the next quarter with health projects to develop a strategy to distribute HIV/AIDS related messages through the MISTOWA network (websites, newsletters, etc). For example, MISTOWA will forge partnerships with several West African AIDS Education initiatives, such as Africare’s Mobile Population HIV/AIDS Initiative, The World Bank’s HIV/AIDS Abidjan-Lagos Transport Corridor

Project, The West African Private Sector AIDS Network (WAPSAN), and the Prévention du SIDA sur les Axes Migratoires de l’Afrique de l’Ouest (PASMAO) programs.

PIR 4. Nigeria

Project activities intensified in Nigeria with the official launching on 3rd March 2005. The event was co-organized with ECOWAS and witnessed by 100 stakeholders and partners from international, regional and national institutions and organizations. Project CTO and COP visited the famous Lagos Mile 12 market and had discussions with the grains, garri and perishable products associations. The market handles over 10,000 tons of food staples on daily basis and serves urban consumers in and around Lagos as well as neighboring countries such as Benin and Togo. Representatives of the national market information system (NAMIS) and of Producers and Traders organizations were supported to participate in several training workshops and conferences at the West African level with the view to integrating Nigeria into the regional system. Preparations were made for three major events to be held in Nigeria during the next quarter. They include holding a regional onion forum for about 100 participants in the onion supply chain, the celebration of the 20th anniversary of the Dawanau market and a Crop Outlooks Conference for Nigeria.

PIR 4.1. Effectiveness of Existing and New MIS in Nigeria Improved

MISTOWA worked with NAMIS (the national market information systems) to extend its reach from the current 10-state, 10-ADP coverage to 27 states. Therefore, surveys were conducted during the quarter to make an inventory of the human and logistical resources available in the new states to be covered. Weekly market prices continued to be collected on MISTOWA commodities by ADP enumerators and collated and published by NAMIS through the print and broadcast media as well as in the special NAMIS news bulletins. Project staff discussed plans to make NAMIS more effective. They involve providing further training to the enumerators to collect and “load” daily information through the internet cafes directly to NAMIS and to the WAG. The supervisors will be trained to use the database to do trend analysis for the local audience while MISTOWA staff will do a similar trend and

comparative analysis across states and countries and publish as “fact sheets” for the benefit of producer and trader associations.

In parallel, the project is working directly with the Dawanau, Lagos Mile 12, and Bodija international (Ibadan) market enumerators to monitor transaction prices and quantities of key commodities in those markets on a regular basis (weekly, daily). This information is being made available on a real time basis using fast ICT technology to feed the WAG database, and is also published in the fortnightly NAMIS Agribusiness Newsletter.

PIR 4.2. Capacities of TOs and POs Strengthened

MISTOWA concentrated its efforts in the quarter to strengthen the effectiveness of POs and TOs in the Dawanau and the Lagos Mile 12 markets. The efforts include an inventory of membership and activities of the associations that would help the project serve them better. Plans also call for training market enumerators to collect and upload data. MISTOWA staff and the CTO visited the Lagos Mile 12 Market that spreads over 2 hectares and is a major distribution point for major food crops: leafy vegetables, yam, maize, millet, sorghum, rice, cowpeas, tomatoes and onion within Nigeria and to neighboring countries of Ghana, Benin and Cote d’ Ivoire (see trip report in the annex for details). The market is organized into commodity associations (e.g grains, yam, and perishable crops associations) with total membership of about 45,000 traders trading approximately 2000 tons of produce per day.

Although transactions worth several millions of Naira pass through the association, this is not documented. A few traders keep some kind of records of their activities. Mr. Iroh showed us his sales receipt book as well as his creditor ledger. There is need for training in record keeping, membership drive and access to credit. The major concern of the association is how they will benefit from participating in the projects. After staff explained the benefits, the group expressed support for the MISTOWA project and the wish to be part of the MISTOWA launching in Abuja.



During the quarter, MISTOWA staff engaged stakeholders to plan an outlook conference for the next quarter. The conference will review the agricultural and food

situation and trade opportunities in Nigeria. They also planned to hold the 20th anniversary of the establishment of the Dawanau market followed by a regional onion forum, all scheduled for May 2005.

4. Project Management and Administration

Staffing

The recruitment status of key project staff as of March 31 is as follows:

Position	Staff	Duty Station	Status
Chief of Party	Dr. Kofi Debrah	Accra	<i>At post since August 04; Moved to Accra since November 04.</i>
M & E specialist	Mr. Chris Amedo	Accra	<i>At post since December 1, 2004</i>
Public Relations and Communications Expert	To be identified	Accra	<i>To be recruited locally as consultant on need basis</i>
<i>Market Information Systems Unit</i>			
Deputy Chief of Party/Head of MIS Unit	Mr. Patrice Annequin	Accra	<i>At post since August 04; Moved to Accra since December 18, 2004</i>
Database & Website Manager	Mr. Yachina Dete	Accra	<i>At post since August 04</i>
Web Editor	Joel Dossomou	Accra	<i>At post since January 04</i>
Database Developer	To be identified	Accra	<i>Local consultancy on need basis</i>
<i>Business Development Unit</i>			
Business and Trade Advisor	Vacant	Accra	<i>Job offered to Soule Goura Bio was declined. New search begun.</i>
Producers' Organizations Advisor	Mr. Charles Nouatin	Ouagadougou	<i>Interviewed, references checked. Salary negotiations in progress.</i>
Traders' Organizations Advisor combined with Mali field	Mr. Ibrahim Toure	Bamako	<i>To begin 1 May 2005.</i>

Coordinator			
Training Coordinator and Advisor	Mr. Emmanuel Alognikou	Accra	<i>At post since January</i>
Project Assistant and field coordinator (Ghana)	Mr. Musa Taylor	Accra	<i>At post since December 1, 2004</i>
<i>Administration & Finance Unit</i>			
Finance and Admin Officer	Victoire Kpadjoua	Accra	<i>At post since September 2004</i>
Secretary / Accountant	Esi Banson	Accra	<i>At post since December 2004</i>
Accounting Assistant	Adam Tampuri	Accra	<i>At post since February 2005</i>
Receptionist	Evado Mensah	Accra	<i>At post since December , 2004</i>
<i>Field Staff</i>			
Field Coordinator, Nigeria	Mr. Henry Ekpiken	Abuja	<i>At post since December 1, 2004; retained from the USAID / DAIMINA project.</i>
TO & PO Coordinator, Southern Nigeria	Mr. Kola Kuku	Lagos/Ibadan	<i>At post since December 1, 2004; retained from the USAID / DAIMINA project.</i>
TO & PO Coordinator, Northern Nigeria	Mr. Gafar Ajao	Kano	<i>Interviewed. Will begin May 1, 2005.</i>
Project Assistant	Blessing Ihediwa	Abuja	<i>At post since December 1, 2004; retained from the USAID / DAIMINA project.</i>
Field Coordinator, Benin	Mr. Alain Soglo	Cotonou	<i>At post since March 2005.</i>
N. Benin activity Coordinator	To be identified	Banikoara	<i>Made possible by USAID/Benin buy-in</i>
TO & MIS Coordinator, Burkina	Mr Sami Traoré	Ouagadougou	<i>At post since February 2005</i>
Project Assistant	To be identified	Bamako	<i>To be recruited when Mr. Ibrahim Toure begins work on May 1, 2005</i>
Field Coordinator,	Mr Sadibou Gueye	Dakar	<i>At post since February 2005.</i>

Senegal			<i>Hosted by IDRC</i>
TO & MIS Coordinator	Mr Raoul Klutse	Lome	<i>IFDC Regional office support to project (cost share)</i>
Project assistant	Gisele Dovi	Lome	<i>IFDC Regional office support to project (cost share)</i>

Performance Monitoring and Evaluation

To provide comprehensive coverage for project progress review, the MISTOWA Monitoring & Evaluation system will track three types of results indicators: a) performance and b) intermediate impact c) final impact. The results information is geared to the SO-4 Results Framework of WARP and to IEHA and TRADE initiative results with indicators summarized in the project M & E document.

The project continued to collect and refine baseline data and will shortly be positioned to report on specific levels of accomplishment.

Grant Management

The project contains funding for two types of grants to partners and other collaborators – equipment grants (which include software, IT support and related training) and competitive grants. During the quarter MISTOWA invited requests for equipment grants from its regional and national partners. A total of 14 organizations completed the application process, which requires an explanation and justification of what types of equipment and related support is needed, and a detailed budget. (Another five organizations – all from Nigeria, requested funds; but they did not provide sufficient information and will not be considered during this round of awards.)

The 14 applications requested a total of over \$1.7 million in grants. (The project expects to award equipment grants totaling \$1.62 million during the project. That figure includes \$312,000 allocated for equipment maintenance and upgrades.) A synthesis of the applications and the budgets is attached (Appendix B). Project staff had helped the regional partners assess their equipment needs during the design phase and consulted with them during this application phase. All are well-known entities.

Project staff set aside one request (from a state level trade association) and screened the line items of the others based on a standard set of criteria and costs. For example, the number of computer packages (printer, USP, software) for regional partners was linked to the number of national members, and the costs were standardized (as will be the equipment, which the project will purchase in bulk, from the US whenever possible). Set amounts for IT personnel, maintenance, and training – and the grant duration through Sept. 2006, were also established. The grant agreements will require a 50% in kind, cash or other cost share/match; sharing of trade and other market information generated, and a plan for sustaining the IT and other support needed to maintain the equipment and its project functions beyond FY 06. In order to ensure effective monitoring of the agreements and budgets, the project plans to hire a grants administration professional and assess a fee of 5% to cover the costs of performance monitoring, including staff and training support.

The project equipment grants committee scaled back the requests from \$1.7 million to \$ 1 million. A comparison by applicant and the budget breakdowns are included in the attachment (Appendix B). The project will inform the applicants of the awards and conditions in April and expects to sign agreements and order the equipment in May for June delivery and installation.

Once the equipment is in place, project staff will re-assess needs and invite a second, and final, round of applications for equipment grants in early 2006. The first round of annual competitive grants will take place in September of this year. (The project plans to award a total of \$1 million over the four years as competitive grants, limited to \$25,000 each.)

Reports Prepared and Submitted

During the reporting period, MISTOWA staff and implementing partners produced and submitted a number of reports listed in Table 5.

Table 5. MISTOWA Reports, September-December 2004

Report	Submitted to/status
Conférence Régionale sur la “Situation Agricole et Alimentaire et les Opportunités d’Echanges dans le Sahel et en Afrique de l’Ouest » Rapport Final	Available at MISTOWA office
Rapport de Synthèse: Atelier de formation sur l’intégration des systèmes d’information de marché agricole en Afrique de l’Ouest	Available in draft form at MISTOWA office
NAMIS Bulletin/Newsletter (Nigeria); Jan-March,	Circulated to 1,600 subscribers in

2005	Nigeria
Compte Rendu de Réunion de Relance de Coordination Nationale des Opérateurs Economique Agro-alimentaire du Mali (CONOESAM)	Circulated to members of ROESAO and available at MISTOWA office
MISTOWA Information Monthly Newsletter (January-March)	Circulated to a mailing list of between 500 and 2000. Available on the project website for downloading
Compte Rendu de Réunion de l'Assemblée Générale extraordinaire et retraite pour la préparation de la conférence régionale sur les perspectives agricoles, Bamako, 14-15 March	Circulated to members of ROESAO and available at MISTOWA office
Proceedings of the training workshop Technical Knowledge on Crop Protection Products for GAIDA, Kumasi, 14-18 March	Circulated to members of GAIDA and available at MISTOWA office
General Reports on PO and TO participation at the 6 th International Agricultural Trade Fair in Dakar, Senegal	Available in draft form at the MISTOWA office
Rapport de synthèse de Mission GAPTO au Mali	Available in MISTOWA office. Copy sent to TradeMali

Contact List

Yachina Dete, Database Specialist and Web Manager, compiled a MISTOWA contact list from various sources including stakeholders consulted during the Regional Crops Outlook Conference and the International Agricultural Trade Fair. By the end of March 2005, the list had over 2000 addresses that receive MISTOWA monthly newsletter and other information on regular basis.

Key Visitors

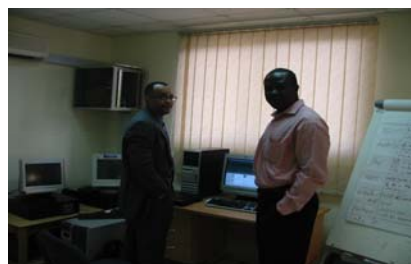
A summary list of visitors received during the quarter is given below:

Date	Visitors	Institution	Purpose
12 January 2005	Phil Broughton, Christopher Grace, Ron Stryker, Jerre Manorolla, Meredith J. Soule and Jeremy Strauss	Chief of Party Ghana Trade & Investment Program (TIPCEE)	Discuss possibilities of collaboration with TIPCEE project
18 January 2005	Dr. M. Sola Afolabi	ECOWAS (Community Computer Centre)	Working visit for MISTOWA
31 January 2005	Hélène David-Benz	CIRAD	Projet FSR OP/CIRAD/MAE France

31 January 2005	Sébastien Subsol	Bureau des Politiques agricoles et de la sécurité alimentaire	Projet FSR OP/CIRAD/MAE France
2 February 2005	Janice Z. Broadman	EDC	ICT & Telecommunications Experts and related companies seeking collaboration technical support for MISTOWA
2 February 2005	Emma Ancrum, Barbara Keating	Computer Frontiers Inc.	ICT & Telecommunications Experts and related companies seeking collaboration technical support for MISTOWA
2 February 2005	Edward Malloy	USAID (Policy Advisor)	ICT & Telecommunications Experts and related companies seeking collaboration & technical support for MISTOWA
2 February 2005	Judith Payne	USAID (e-Business Advisor)	ICT & Telecommunications Experts and related companies seeking collaboration & technical support for MISTOWA
3 February 2005	Darrell Upshaw	USDA (Development Resources Specialist)	Discuss issues on Grades & standards
11 February 2005	Amadou Camara	USAID Bamako and CTO, Trade Mali project	Accompanied Jeremy Strauss to discuss MISTOWA/Trade Mali collaboration
24 February 2005	Cynthia Kanko	WAEN	Discuss possible collaboration/partnership with MISTOWA/IFDC Project
24 February 2005	Mansa Ampomah-Oteng	Royal Ghanaian Airlines	Discuss possible collaboration/partnership with MISTOWA/IFDC Project
23 March 2005	Peter Filus	ECASARD – network (153-member organization)	Discuss about the MISTOWA project



Amadou Camara from USAID/Mali with Jeremy Strauss, MISTOWA CTO with Patrice Annequin, DCOP



Darrell Upshaw, USDA with Yachina Dete, MISTOWA Database Manager



Dr. Sola Afolabi, Director of CCC, ECOWAS in discussion with Chris Amedo, M&E specialist



John Allgood, Admin/Finance Director, IFDC and Debbie Shedd, Senior Accounts Supervisor

In addition, John Allgood and Debbie Shedd from IFDC Headquarters in Alabama provided backstopping supporting regarding accounting, administrative and grant procedures.

5. Activities Planned (April to June 2005)

For the next quarter, April-June 2005, MISTOWA plans the following activities, presented by PIR.

PIR 1. Increased Efficiency of Regional MIS

- Award of grants, procurement and installation of IT equipment for grantees under the MISTOWA equipment grant program
- Development of Version 2 of RESIMAO website and platform (www.resimao.org) including SMS and GIS facilities in collaboration with ZADI.
- Design and launch of major implementing partners (ROESÁO, RECAO, and FACIA) websites (June)
- Elaboration and dissemination of user manuals and training modules for local IT administrators and counterparts, with CTA/ZADI and Busylab
- Organization of regional training workshop on MIS concepts and tools for ROPPA national platforms and other national PO in Cotonou (May)
- Organizing a 5-day international MIS training course in Accra for African MIS managers (June 20-24). In collaboration with Busylab, ZADI, eChoupal and USDA

PIR 2. Improved Capacities of Regional Trader and Producer Organizations

- Two-day regional forum organized for onion stakeholders (producers, traders, policy makers, etc) in Kano, Nigeria, in collaboration with the Regional Watchdog for Onion based in Niamey (May 23-24)
- Follow up of business contacts made by TO and PO during trade tours and trade fairs, with USAID country projects in Mali, Ghana, Benin, Senegal, and Nigeria (May)
- Organizational Management Training held for ROPPA members and their national affiliates to be held in Benin (June)
- Completion of inventory of PO and TO membership to create directories
- National workshops for ROESAO chapters in Mali, Senegal, Burkina Faso and Benin, including OMT and basic uses of ICT
- Analysis and report on the survey of producers and traders organizations (May/June).

PIR 3. Improved West African Trade Environment

- Training of GAPTO members on the use of weighing scales culminating in the official launch of standard weights and measures in Ghana (May/June)
- Involvement of trade and producer associations in the collection and establishment of baseline indicators for project commodities in the focus countries (Continued)
- Participation of project staff and key partners' representatives in regional and international conferences and workshops on trade, customs, economic integration, agricultural policy.

PIR 4. Increased Efficiency of MIS in Nigeria

- Provision and installation of IT equipment for grantees under the MISTOWA equipment grant program (May, June)
- Local TO trained on use of IT to post daily prices, news and offers on www.wa-agritrade.net for major markets in Nigeria (May, June)
- Nigeria-specific crop outlook conference in Kano (May 26-27)
- 20th anniversary of Dawanau Market and trade fair exhibition (May 25) in Kano, with DMDA and regional participants

Project Management and Administration

1. Staffing

- IFDC is currently recruiting a person to fill the **Business and Trade Advisor** position and hopes to fill the position by the end of the next quarter.

2. Grants Documents

- Announce grant awards and finalize disbursements during the quarter.

3. Newsletter

- Continue to publish monthly newsletters

4. Performance Monitoring & Reporting

- Complete and discuss MISTOWA M & E plan with CTO
- Monitor and report on performance in the next quarterly report.
- Respond to ad-hoc requests from WARP and others.

6. Attachments

A. Trip Reports

1. Report of trip to IITA-Ibadan Nigeria, 14-20 Feb 05 by Kofi Debrah

Purpose of the trip:

- Invited by IITA to participate in a workshop to discuss the West African SAAKS (Strategic Analysis of Knowledge Systems) node implementation.
- Visit the Lagos Mile 12 market to meet traders' organizations that MISTOWA would work with.
- Discuss preparations for the MISTOWA Nigeria launching and other administrative with MISTOWA staff in Nigeria.

Major Conclusions

- The SAAKS meeting provided a platform to present MISTOWA and areas in which the two programs may complement each other.
- Obtained a better understanding of what SAAKS intends to do
- Explored the possibilities of IITA role in MISTOWA with Stan Blade, IITA Director Research for Development.
- Familiarized myself with activities and potential of the Lagos Mile 12 market for intra regional trade
- Discussed the preparations for the MISTOWA Nigeria launching and other administrative issues with MISTOWA staff.

Description of activities

SAAKS Meeting (Feb 16-17)

I attended the SAKSS meeting together with Jeremy Strauss, MISTOWA CTO and Robert Kagbo, IEHA Coordinator, USAID WARP, Accra at the invitation of IITA. I was included in the program and I presented the MISTOWA project. Concern was expressed about the non-inclusion of yam and sorghum/millet in the focus commodities in Nigeria and Mali, respectively.

Michael Johnson from IFPRI gave the background to SAKSS as a network that will bring together partners to share data, tools, analytical outputs and knowledge that will assist in meeting rural development and food security goals. The development goals include country-level poverty reduction strategic programs (PRSP) and continental level goals including the Initiative to End Hunger in Africa (IEHA), the Millennium Development Goals (MDG) and NEPAD's CAADP¹. SAKSS expected results include i) the development of a common analytical framework for monitoring and evaluation of agricultural market, trade and rural development investment impacts on economic development, hunger and poverty

¹ New African Partnership for African Development (NEPAD)'s Comprehensive Accelerated Agricultural Development Program (CAADP)

alleviation ii) assessment of ‘best bet’ investment option for specific geographic areas iii) facilitation of data analysis and widespread sharing of knowledge. IITA will coordinate the West African regional SAKSS node out of its headquarters in Ibadan with initial focus on the three IEHA countries: Ghana, Mali and Nigeria. Network members are expected to cooperate in the sharing and production of new “knowledge” that will help support and serve the needs of USAID and its partners in IEHA as well as those of NEPAD, ECOWAS and CORAF.

The participants included representatives of market information systems (RESIMAO), government ministries of statistics and food security, research institutions, universities, non-governmental organizations from Mali, Nigeria and Ghana. Three consultants presented the results of data availabilities and constraints in Ghana, Mali and Nigeria. Working groups were formed along country lines for further discussion. The gaps identified and the ways to fill them were discussed and the plan for the next six months traced. A major emphasis will be on regional trade in agricultural commodities and action would be at three levels, national, sub-regional and continental. The workshop organizers will work to produce showcase outputs in the next few months to create more awareness about SAKSS.

Meeting with IITA Deputy Director General (Feb 17)

At the request of IITA, I had discussions with Dr. Stanford Blade, IITA’s Deputy Director General and Director of Research for Development. The meeting was held in the presence of Dr. Kehinde Makinde of IITA and Dr. Sola Afolabi, ECOWAS. The meeting was to discuss the roles IITA could play in the different technical committees set up to implement the ECOWAS Agricultural Policy on the one hand and in the MISTOWA activities on the other. IITA’s capabilities and expertise vis-à-vis MISTOWA include possible support they can give to the supply chain in the selected commodities in terms of production and quality issues as demanded by the market. They can also bring the RUSEP experience in linking producers to traders as well as in the dissemination of market information. I asked for a copy of the IITA proposal to better identify what roles they might play and to use ideas that may be relevant to Nigeria. We concluded that IITA would be invited to the MISTOWA launching for Nigeria on 3rd March in Abuja followed by a short technical meeting on the 4th to further discuss roles for IITA in MISTOWA. Dr Afolabi invited IITA to make a formal request for a technical meeting between IITA and ECOWAS for further discussions.

Visit to Lagos Mile 12 Market (18 February)

I visited the Lagos Mile 12 Market with Jeremy Strauss in the company of Kuku Kola and Henry Ekpiken, MISTOWA staff in Nigeria. The market spreads over 2 hectares and is a major distribution point for major food crops: leafy vegetables, yam, maize, millet, sorghum, rice, cowpeas, tomatoes and onion within Nigeria and to neighboring countries of Ghana, Benin and Cote d’Ivoire (picture of the market available). The market is organized into commodity associations (e.g grains, yam, and perishable crops associations) with total membership of about 45,000 traders trading approximately 2000 tons of produce per day.

We visited the grains dealers' association, the perishable products association and the garri sellers' association. The grains association appears to be very well organized with dynamic executive members (picture with some executives available). Mr Paul Iroh, President of the Mile 12 grain dealers association and Secretary of the Grain Marketers Association of Nigeria explained the history and activities of the association. We explained MISTOWA's mission and expectations. They have a small office in the market which is used for meetings of the executives. The association has been duly registered at the Lagos State Level and recently at the federal level. Members pay registration fees and monthly dues and new members need references from established and experienced members and a thorough background check lasting about a month is required for new members. The association provides services such as the consolidation of supply to meet members' supply orders on LPOs they cannot supply. They also serve as guarantors for loans and provide transportation services. The association has networks in the northern states (supply sources) which communicate daily prices on the markets through the cellular phone. While there, Mr Paul Iroh received a call from a Katsina agent communicating current prices of the different grains (picture of Mr. Iroh receiving the call available). The visit took us through the grains market where we saw several stacks of maize, cowpea, rice, sorghum, wheat. We saw women "cleaning" and "grading" the grains using local sieves of different mesh sizes (picture of a woman cleaning the grains available).

Although transactions worth several millions of Naira pass through the association, this is not documented. A few traders keep some kind of records of their activities. Mr. Iroh showed us his sales receipt book as well as creditors ledger. There is need for training in record keeping, membership drive and access to credit. The major concern of the association is what they would benefit from participating in the projects, and after explaining that the benefits, they expressed support for the MISTOWA project. They will be invited to the MISTOWA launching in Abuja. *Paul Iroh, of the grains dealers association demonstrating the use of local corn popping machine to the visitors*



We had discussions with about 10 executive members of the Perishable Product Sellers' Association led by Alhaji Wada Mohamed, General Secretary (group picture available). The association members trade in onions, potatoes, peppers, ginger, garlic, and tomatoes and they claim it is the largest perishable products market in West Africa. We observed baskets of tomatoes as well as huge piles of empty baskets ready to be sent to the production points for supply (pictures of stacks of empty baskets and those full of tomatoes available). We explained the MISTOWA project to the executive members and their concern include having a guarantee that MISTOWA would not just be another project that comes to them and never return. They are also concerned about the perishability of the tomatoes and wondered what the project would do to help them. They also expressed the difficulties they face transacting business across the borders and appealed to the project to intervene and facilitate their movement. We were informed they source their supplies through individual producers and we suggested the project could help organize the producers and train them to supply to meet the market demand.

We visited the garri sellers' association and had discussions with their executives. An executive member explained the process of garri making to us (a 30 second video clip available). Their main concern was whether MISTOWA could provide them with financial support to improve their sheds. Kuku explained to them the project is not a donor but by working with them there is every possibility they could be linked to the banks for loans. They noted they would make in-kind contributions in return for any assistance we provide in training, sourcing financing and markets.

Meeting with MISTOWA project staff (19 Feb)

I met with Kuku and Ekpiken to discuss project technical and administrative issues at the IITA Guest house. We discussed the finalization of their employment contracts, procedures for hiring temporary staff for specific project activities, project launching and benchmarking activities in the Dawanau and Mile 12 markets.

I gave Mr. Ekpiken authorization to hire temporary staff to help in the inventorization exercise of producers and traders organizations in the Kano and other states. The IFDC temporary employment template will be sent to them for adaptation.

We discussed the project launching program and made substantial modifications to include separate technical meetings with IITA and ECOWAS in the morning of the 4th March. A final list of participants will be sent to Accra for approval together with detailed budget. Official invitation letters within Nigeria will be signed by Ekpiken and hand-delivered. Since IFDC no longer has its administrative and finance officer, funds for the launching and other project activities would be requested from HQ into Dr. Singh's account for further transfer as advance to Blessing. She would provide details of expenditure to HQ after the launching.

2. Report on the Trip to Nigeria for the MISTOWA Launching by MISTOWA team

Purpose of the Trip

- To launch MISTOWA project in Nigeria
- To discuss procedures to engage consultants to do special tasks for MISTOWA
- To discuss with ECOWAS secretariat and IITA roles they can play in implementing the project

Activities and Meetings Held

Meeting at IFDC office – Tuesday, March 1, 2005

The MISTOWA team arrived in Abuja at 8.00 am on Tuesday after spending the night in Lagos at IITA guest house. The team then checked in at Bolingo Hotel and proceeded immediately to IFDC office to meet Henry Ekpiken, (MISTOWA Project Coordinator in Nigeria and Blessing Ihediwa, Administrative/Finance officer) who are MISTOWA project staff in Nigeria. Prior to the meeting, we briefed Dr. Singh on the activities to be undertaken in Nigeria. Immediately after that we met in the IFDC conference room and discussed the launching program together with the Nigeria team. Mr. Henry Ekpiken briefed the meeting

on the arrangements and contacts made towards the launching. The program was reviewed and finalized.

The Grant document relative to the implementing partners in Nigeria was discussed at length. The COP reiterated the need for staff involvement to get the partners prepare their proposals covering their needs and activities for monies to be disbursed by the end of March 2005.

Meeting at USAID office – Wednesday, March 2, 2005

Henry Ekpiken joined us at USAID office at 9.00am and we met Mr. Nduka Okaro, (Monitoring and Coordination officer of USAID/Nigeria) who represented the (Director of USAID/Nigeria). The Director was unable to attend the meeting because of important assignments he had to complete during the period and so she delegated Mr. Okaro to represent him. The COP of MISTOWA briefed Mr. Okaro about the launching and the objectives and scope of the project. He explained the grant document and the procedures needed to be followed to obtain the grant. He touched on the commodities that MISTOWA is following and explained that the list is not exhaustive and other important commodities like yam, cowpea, rice etc which were hitherto not included on the list but are very important in Nigeria could be added. He gave an example of how Benin/USAID is supporting the project with 600,000 USD to extend the project to Northern Benin. He mentioned that USAID/Nigeria could also buy-into the project to support these commodities.

The COP again talked about the use of USAID resource centers in Nigeria to implement MISTOWA activities.

Mr. Patrice Annequin also talked about the RESIMAO and WAAgritrade websites that have been created and how they will help facilitate and improve trade in the sub-region. He briefed Mr. Okaro on 30 important regional markets that will feature in the MISTOWA project

On his part, Mr. Okaro said it will be a great opportunity to buy into MISTOWA project and explained that the project has come to Nigeria at the right time when decisions are being made on new projects with similar objectives. He advised IFDC to continue negotiating with them for possible buy-in once the offer is made. The meeting ended at 9.30 am.

Launching of MISTOWA Project – Thursday, March 3, 2005

The launch activities commenced at 10.00am and the welcome address was presented by Dr. Sola Afolabi who represented the Executive Secretary of ECOWAS, Dr. Mohammed Ibn Chambas. Dr. Chambas was out in Niger for another important assignment.

The representative of Nigeria's Minister of Commerce chaired the function and gave a brief remark. That was followed by a presentation on MISTOWA Project Overview by the Chief of Party, Dr. S.K. Debrah. IFDC's Contribution towards Regional Integration was presented by Robert Groot, Director, IFDC-Africa. That was followed by a short remark by Mr. Nduka Okaro who represented USAID-Nigeria. The keynote address and official launching was performed by Dr. Ingawa, Director of PCU at the Agriculture Ministry who represented Mallam Adamu Bello, Hon. Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development.

The technical session which commenced in the afternoon immediately after the coffee break was chaired by Dr. Ingawa. Dr. H. B. Singh, IFDC-Nigeria made a presentation on the topic “Contribution of DAIMINA in strengthening the MIS and Trader Organizations in Nigeria”. His presentation was immediately followed by Patrice Annequin. His topic was an Overview of the Project’s websites: www.mistowa.org and www.wa-agritrade.net. Representatives of NAMIS, IITA, DAWANAU Market Association, Lagos Mile 12 Market Association, RIFAN and FEPSAN presented short backgrounds about their organizations.

Mr. Chris Amedo made a short presentation on the Grants Proposal and urged all collaborators and partners to apply for it immediately.

The launching ended at about 3.00 pm.

At about 4.30 pm the MISTOWA team met representatives of ECOWAS secretariat led by Dr. Sola Afolabi on possible ways of collaborating with MISTOWA project. Possible areas of collaboration include:

- Facilitating trade in the sub-region
- Introducing standard weights and measures
- Serving as resource persons in cross-border trade activities for the project
- Helping in capacity building of trader and producer organizations etc
- Collaborating in market information systems
- Monitoring and evaluation
- Exports and imports within the sub-region
- Identifying baseline trade data
- Sharing calendar of activities

Later in the evening around 6.40 pm, the MISTOWA team met IITA representative, Dr. Makinde at the hotel and also discussed possible areas of collaboration. The areas include:

- Expertise in Cassava, Rice and Cowpea production, processing to marketing
- Establishment of baseline data on cassava, cowpea and rice
- Data collection and analysis
- Provision of market information on these commodities
- Monitoring and Evaluation
- Specialized studies in cross-border trade activities
- Capacity building for TOs and POs
- Linking POs and TOs to credit facilities

It was agreed that IITA could be contracted for a short period of time (about 6 months if possible) for specific activities and deliverables.

The meeting came to a close at 7.40 p.m

Meeting at IFDC office - Friday, March 4, 2005

The COP explained the procedures manual, especially for hiring local consultants and hiring temporary employees with Henry Ekpiken and Blessing Ihediwa. He also briefed Kola KuKu responsible for Lagos Mile 12 market on how to prepare contracts for consultants collecting baseline data values for the project. General administrative issues were also discussed.

Report of trip to Bamako, 6-20 March 2005 by MISTOWA team.

Purpose of the trip:

1. Organize the MISTOWA / CTA workshop for RESIMAO and ICT officers [March 9-11]
2. Participate in RESIMAO General Assembly [March 7-8]
3. Participate in MISTOWA / ROESAO workshop for CONOESAM [March 9-12]
4. Participate in ROESAO meeting [March 14-15]
5. Organize and accompany GATPO members (Ghana) and CONOESAM (Mali) on trade mission [March 14-19]
6. Co-organize the Regional Conference on Agricultural and Food Situation in West Africa Collaboration with CILSS [March 16-18]

Description of activities

MISTOWA / CTA workshop for RESIMAO and ICT officers [9-11 March]

MISTOWA organized a training workshop for 26 MIS managers and IT specialists from 8 countries. The workshop was sponsored by CTA [www.cta.int ; www.cta.nl] for up to 35,000 euros. Marc Bernard, ZADI [www.zadi.org ; www.isicad.org] , was the key resource person with MISTOWA IT specialists, Yachina Dete and Raoul Klutse, technical and logistic backstopping. Key areas of this 3-days workshop were: 1/ launching of www.resimao.org, a web based platform developed by ZADI, using GIS and PhProjekt [www.phprojekt.org] utilities to link, aggregate and network RESIMAO members, composed with 7 national public MIS; 2/ reporting and updating the 2005-2008 road map developed in Nov 2004; 3/ identifying and elaborating training curriculum and modules, and extension tools for MIS managers and users. Yachina Dete is the technical manager of this component, responding to ZADI and CTA. Raoul Klutse is preparing the proceedings and financial statements.

RESIMAO General Assembly [7-8 March]

RESIMAO held its first ordinary general assembly since the new Board took office in November 2004 at Kpalimé, Togo. Twenty-four participants from RESIMAO (17 representing 8 national MIS and full members), ROPPA, RECAO, ROESAO, CILSS, ANOPACI, and LARES attended the G.A. 5 working groups created in Kpalimé, presented reports on:

- Action plan and logical framework for 2005-2008
- Terms of Reference to establish / strengthen MIS in Togo and Nigeria
- IT platform and database

- Quarterly road map for the Cellule Operationnelle
- Budget for 2005 and 2005-2008.

RESIMAO amended its status and by-laws drafted in Kpalimé. The Network will be registered before end of April 2005 as a non-profit association, with headquarters in Bamako, Mali. A banking account will be opened at ECOBANK as soon as the association is registered.

A committee composed with Salif Diarra, Sani Laouali and Mamadou Sy worked with Patrice Annequin to prepare the RESIMAO application for equipment grant. Drafts of budget and application will be finalized and submitted to MISTOWA for consideration before March 20. Raoul Klutse is preparing the proceedings, and is assembling with RESIMAO hard and electronic copies of documents, presentations, and pictures presented during the G.A.

MISTOWA / ROESAO workshop for CONOESAM [9-12 March]

CONOESAM is the Malian Chapter of ROESAO, and one of its founding members in 2000. MISTOWA sponsored a national meeting with 30 CONOESAM representatives and potential members from the 10 regions of Mali. The objectives were to prepare a baseline survey and exhaustive inventory of the members, most of them being traders, and transporters, producers or stockists.

A road map was developed to complete the inventory, and prepare a general assembly on May 11-12 to renew the Board, modify the status and by-laws, and set up a viable action plan for the next 3 years. CONOESAM will take advantage of this event to organize a trade exhibition in Sikasso, an important cross border trade market with Cote d'Ivoire and Burkina Faso, and a major area of production of potato, mangoes, and cowpea.

Patrice Annequin presented to participants the MISTOWA project and a 45 mn video clip on MISTOWA launching and business visit of ROESAO President, Ms Botti, Cote d'Ivoire to several markets in Accra with GAPTO (ROESAO Ghana) on Feb 10-11.

ROESAO Extraordinary General Assembly [March 11-12]

With support received by the project and from CILSS, the Executive Council of ROESAO met at Koutena Hotel in Bamako, with some representatives of national members, totalizing 28 participants, in order to

- Refine the action plan of ROESAO at regional and national level
- Identify the needs of ROESAO members at national level
- Prepare the ROESAO presentation at the Crop Outlook Conference
- Prepare the participation of ROESAO at the FIARA exhibition in Dakar (march 24-31), with support from the Senegalese chapter of the network
- Prepare the Inventory of National Coordinations, and inventory and trade analysis of their national affiliates with support from MISTOWA (April, May)

With Emmanuel Alognikou, Charles Nouatin facilitated this 2-day session, and prepared comprehensive proceedings of the workshop.

Trip and field visit for GATPO members (Ghana) and CONOESAM (Mali) – [March 14-19]

USAID funded projects (TIPCEE in Ghana, MaliTrade in Mali, and MISTOWA), cosponsored a 5-day trade tour for 7 members of GAPTO, to explore business opportunities with their ROESAO counterparts in Mali. From March 14 to 19, GAPTO representatives visited producers and traders organizations, traders and market places in Bamako, Ségou, Niono, and Sikasso. The trade delegation was accompanied by MISTOWA (Sami Traoré), MaliTrade and CONOESAM staff. The GAPTO delegation identified several market opportunities and was particularly satisfied that the quality of products found in the Malian market would equally suit the Ghanaian market. Business contacts were made and hopefully improve the level of trade between Mali and Ghana for mangoes and potatoes from Sikasso; and for tomato, rice, live cattle and red meat from Segou and Niono. Sami Traoré is preparing a technical report for follow up by MISTOWA TO coordinators in Mali (Ibrahima Touré) and in Ghana (Musa Taylor), while Emmanuel Alognikou prepares the financial statements with the 2 USAID projects involved.

Regional Conference on Agricultural and Food Situation in West Africa Collaboration with CILSS [March 16-18]

The 6th edition of the annual Regional Conference on Agricultural and Food Situation in West Africa was jointly sponsored by MISTOWA and CILSS. This first collaboration will be followed by others over the life of the project, as the 2 institutions agreed to co-organize and sponsor 2 similar Conferences every year, the next one being possibly held in Accra by early October 2005.

Representatives of the 15 ECOWAS countries, Chad and Mauritania, presented their country's agricultural and food situations and their effects on price trends. Up to 40 producers and traders were supported by MISTOWA and AGRITERRA to participate in this important annual event. The regional synthesis of the situation showed decreasing trends in food production and possible shortages to be recorded in Mali, Mauritania, Chad and Niger. This is largely attributable to the recent locust invasion and drought. Proceedings and detailed reports of the outlook conference have been collected by the CILSS team and will be available by mid April on www.mistowa.org.

A special business session was held on March 17 in which more than 50 traders and producers from 17 countries presented offers to supply and bids to buy agricultural products. A total of 112 offers were listed, ranging from cattle on the hoof from Burkina Faso to maize from Niger, sorghum from Nigeria and yams from Cote d'Ivoire. MISTOWA will provide support to concretize the trade deals particularly during the coming lean season. The support will come in the form of individual and personalized follow-ups and through the "buy and sell" pages of the trade website, www.wa-agritrade.net.

Just after the closing ceremony on March 18th, a meeting was held with CILSS (Dramane Coulibaly, Amadou Konaté, and Ibrahima Laouli from Agrhymet), ECOWAS (Dr Sola

Afolabi), and IFDC (Dr Kofi Debrah, Patrice Annequin, Charles Nouatin and Emmanuel Alognikou).

The group agreed on the following points for the next Conferences

- All ECOWAS countries, plus Mauritania and Chad should participate in the Conferences
- 2 conferences should be held annually, the first on in early March and the second one in late September of each year
- Crop outlook should be available for the first conference, and harvest forecasts for the second.
- Conferences should be held alternately in Sahelian and Coastal, and in francophone and Anglophone countries
- More emphasis on communication is needed in order to ensure a full coverage and a large dissemination of the findings in the region. Professional media partners should be contracted to cover the media and communication activities.
- The next Conference could be held in Ghana in mid September 2005, with IFDC/MISTOWA leading the organization.

Meeting with partners [CTA, RECAO, Regional Onion Watchdog]

1. CTA : MOU, road map for RESIMAO

CTA has sponsored the training workshop for RESIMAO, following previous ones at CCC/ECOWAS, Lome, Togo in May 2004, and in Kpalime, Togo, in November 2004. During these trainings, the MISTOWA IT team (P. Annequin, Y. Dete) has progressively elaborated with ZADI (M. Bernard) and CTA (R. Obubo, K. Traoré) a road map to support RESIMAO for the coming years, in order to set up a regional, user oriented, and real time tool that is developed and owned by the network of national MIS in 10 or more ECOWAS countries.

CTA has expressed the wish to support the MISTOWA project for this component, through funding of a number of the activities listed in the road map covering the period 2005-2008, including training and capacity building, ICT software development (RESIMAO platform) and communication (radio) support, for both MIS and PO. CTA has subcontracted ZADI to develop a web based MIS platform, www.resimao.org, and as a resource institution for the related training activities. First evaluations show that total support can be valued at more than \$400,000 over the life of the project.

After discussions with Koda Traoré - and also Rodger Obubo, the need to formalize the relationship and cross support between CTA and IFDC arose. The following timing is proposed for consideration to our respective management:

- General MOU between CTA and IFDC in April 2005, to be signed with the newly appointed CTA director
- Agreement between CTA and IFDC in May 2005 in the frame of MISTOWA, using the RESIMAO road map as ToR, and possibly based on the one signed with Agriterra. Activities will be funded according to an annual work plan or through specific contracts, and include a M&E plan.

- Exploring additional areas of collaboration at regional and national levels (Mali, Nigeria, Cote d'Ivoire), including
 - radio and mass media dissemination with local media e.g. rural radios, and international partners, e.g. WREN media, WorldSpace or SYFIA
 - support to PO for market information and access to markets
 - sharing of database and website contents, e.g. <http://agritrade.cta.int>
 - information, capacity building, studies, and analyzes on general trade agreements, SPS, grade and standards, tariffs and non tariff barriers, in Africa and the Caribbean and the EU
 - funding of special activities e.g. consultancies, study tours, participation to trainings, fairs and conferences [the WSIS in Tunis in Sept 2005 has been identified as a major opportunity to promote MISTOWA and related partners' innovative approach, tools and outputs].

2. RECAO – Dr Gagny Timbo [March 11]

A very constructive meeting with Dr Gagny Timbo, RECAO coordinator on March 11. We prepared a budget for equipment grant to equip the national Chambers and the Regional Coordination. The draft is based on a rapid survey of the 7 member countries (Benin, Burkina, Cote d'Ivoire, Guinea, Mali, Niger, Togo) and an evaluation of capacity building requirements for RECAO in the framework of the preparation of the 2nd phase of PRIECA [June 2004, 78 pages]. Beside equipments, RECAO would considerably improve its information and communication skills and impacts with a dedicated officer at RECAO headquarters in Bamako that MISTOWA and PRIECA should consider for funding. PRIECA II proposal have been accepted (US\$ 2,2 millions for 2005-2008) and the contract will be signed with ACBF in late March. Official launching of the project could be held on May 2005 (1 day). We discussed the opportunity to launch www.recao.org at this occasion and to co-organize and sponsor with CTA and Agriterra other events during the following days, including a 2 days ICT / MIS technical workshop (computer use, www.recao.org), and a G.A. (2 days; renewal of Board, action plan, etc). Under PRIECA, RECAO can contribute in (1) technical trainings (computer and internet use, database management, communication) (2) OMT (3) trade intelligence and market information.

3. Regional Forum for Onion in Nigeria, April 2005

In its 2005 Action Plan, MISTOWA plans to support several fora for project's commodity stakeholders, including onions in Quarter 2. We met with Sani Laouli, head of Niger MIS (SIMA), involved in onion sector surveys and monitoring in Niger, and Issa Tankari, MIS specialist for the PAPEAP ["AgroPastoral Export Promotion Project", www.niger-export.net], and coordinator of the West and Central Africa Onion Watchdog supported by CMA-AOC.

The 3 partners proposed to put resources together to organize a 3-5 days regional forum for onion in Kano, Nigeria in the second half of April. This could be done after the DMDA 20th Anniversary. The PAPEAP and SIMA have already collected a number of data and information of great value for www.wa-agritrade.net, and for MISTOWA M&E purposes,

such as volume and value produced and traded; directories of producers and traders; etc. Other commodities monitored include sesame, hides & skins, cattle on hooves, red meat, gum Arabic, and cowpeas.

B Analysis of Equipment Grants (attached as excel file: “synthesis”)