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QUARTERLY REPORT

JULY 1, 2006 – SEPTEMBER 30, 2006

“Strengthened Networks of Regional Market Information Systems and Traders’ Organizations in West Africa (MISTOWA)”

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List of Abbreviations and Acronyms

ABIP	Agribusiness Information Point
ADP	Agricultural Development Project
APLS	Association des Acheteurs de Produits Locaux
BUSAC	Business Sector Advocacy Challenge Fund
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
FECAIDA	Federal Capital Agricultural Inputs Dealers' Association
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
ICT	Information and Communications Technology
IDRC	International Development Research Center
IFDC	International Fertilizer Development Center
IITA	International Institute for Tropical Agriculture
ISCOS	Institut Syndical pour la Coopération au Développement
MIR	Marketing Inputs Regionally
MIS	Market Information Systems
MISTOWA	Strengthened Networks of Market Information Systems and Traders' Organizations in West Africa
NAMIN	National Agricultural Marketing Information Network (Nigeria)
NAMIS	Nigeria Agri Marketing Information Service
OMA	Observatoire des Marchés Agricoles (Observatory of Agriculture Markets)
OPAM	Office des Produits Agricoles du Mali
PCU	Project Coordinating Unit
PIR	Project Intermediate Result
PO	Producer Organization
RATES	Regional Trade Expansion Support Program
RECAO	Réseau des Chambres d'Agriculture de l'Afrique de l'Ouest (Network of Chambers of Agriculture of West Africa)
ReSAAKS	Regional Strategy Analysis and Knowledge Support Systems
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)
ROPPA	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
SOCAMAD	Société des Coopératives Agricoles et des Produits de Débe
TA	Traders' Association
TO	Trade Organization
URCEP	Union Régionale des Commerçants Exportateurs de Pommes de Terre
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
USDA	United States Department of Agriculture
WABNET	West African Businesswomen Network
WAEMU	West African Economic and Monetary Union
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)

Fourth Quarterly Report (July – September 2006)

Executive Summary

USAID/WARP awarded IFDC a \$14.4 million cooperative agreement in August 2004 to implement a four-year "Regional Market Information Systems and Traders' Organizations in West Africa (MISTOWA)" project. MISTOWA 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. The project focuses on removing key obstacles to trade in West Africa including: i) lack of access to timely information on prices and market opportunities ii) inadequate business skills of producers and traders to respond to production and market opportunities and iii) unfavorable trading environment, including tariff and non-tariff barriers (e.g., harassments at the national borders).

USAID, in a letter dated July 28, 2006, notified IFDC-MISTOWA of USAID's decision to adjust funding levels of its programs to respond to new priorities and opportunities across Africa. MISTOWA will now receive an estimated amount of \$1,200,000 from USAID/Trade, subject to availability of funds. At the same time, the end-of-project date was advanced from September 30, 2008 to September 30, 2007. In addition, past and future funding under the Cooperative Agreement, including \$1,200,000 yet to be obligated, shall total \$9,404,782 and IFDC, in consultation with the Cognizant Technical Officer is to submit a revised program description and a re-aligned budget to the Agreement Officer by August 22, 2006. On September 5, 2006 the MISTOWA COP presented a summary of the project's activities, achievements and future plans at a meeting attended by Jeff Hill (Africa Bureau), the USAID Agriculture and Food Security team (Melissa Knight and Robert Kagbo) and Jeff Cochrane (USAID/Trade). A follow-up meeting was held with an external IEHA evaluation team on September 7, 2006 for further discussions on how the achievements can be consolidated and how they can contribute significantly to the IEHA goals. These and other considerations led to commitments, subject to contract officer and required USAID approvals, of \$700,000 from IEHA funds and of an additional amount, not to exceed \$200,000-\$250,000, to support ROPPA and other producer and trader organizations.

It is against this background that we report progress for the period July to September 2006 and discuss future perspectives for FY 2007.

Major events of the quarter include:

- ✚ **Shea quality training workshop:** In this event, organized in Mali and Burkina Faso, participants improved their skills in the production of high quality nuts and butter to obtain premium prices in the local, regional and international markets.
- ✚ **HIV/AIDS session for women traders:** This special session on HIV/AIDS was held to create awareness on the epidemic among women traders at an ICT training in Kaduna, Nigeria.
- ✚ **ICT training for producer and trader organization members:** During the quarter, a total of 220 producer and trader organization members from Benin, Burkina Faso, Ghana, Mali, Nigeria, Senegal and Togo received general ICT training and more targeted market information management training to prepare them to manage the Agribusiness Information Points (ABIPs).
- ✚ **International MIS training workshop in Cotonou, Benin:** Attended by 40 participants from Benin, Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, Guinea, Mali, Niger, Senegal and Togo, the workshop focused on training on how to operate and finance the ABIPs in ways which enable them to become financially sustainable.

- ✚ **ABIP business training manual developed and tested:** The ABIP training manual was developed, and thereafter tested and refined, in the international MIS training workshop and national training events.
- ✚ **NAIMIN registered as a company:** The Nigerian Agricultural Market Information Network (NAIMIN), a coalition of market information service providers was formally registered as a limited liability company to enable it enter into a business contract with MTN, the largest cellular telephony company in Nigeria, to disseminate market information to subscribers.
- ✚ **Further development of RESIMAO and TRADENET:** Significant improvements were made in, and new functionalities were added to, the public sector market information platform <www.resimao.org> and the private sector trade portal <www.wa-agritrade.net>.
- ✚ **Development of divestiture and sustainability strategies:** Importantly, during this period MISTOWA developed a strategy for divestiture and sustainability of the MIS system.

Successes from the interventions during the quarter include:

- **Increased intra-regional trade:** Intra-regional trade value monitored for 13 trade associations increased by 40% during FY 06, from a baseline value of \$120 million to \$168 million in September 2006.
- **Financial sustainability of the first ABIPs achieved:** Within 9 months of operating as an ABIP, two ABIPs (DMDA and Lagos Mile 12; both located in Nigeria) are close to breaking even, with revenues generated covering costs incurred in providing services. MISTOWA uses the examples of these associations at ABIP business training sessions to illustrate how to make the ABIPs sustainable.
- **Increased use of trade portal website:** Through training and awareness creation, more stakeholders are using the trade portal website www.wa-agritrade.net. Since the last quarter, the number of visits to the site increased by 269%, from 21,887 to 80,794. During the same time period, SMS requests increased by 8% (from 575 to 622) and price uploads by 28% (from 16,263 to 20,828).
- **Greater customization of TradeNet to association needs:** MISTOWA's MIS Unit assisted four associations to create "websites" using the "groups" function on the TradeNet. The function allows users to customize the TradeNet to fit their needs by directly and efficiently managing the contents and membership database of the group or association, while making information on the TradeNet available to them.

Manager's Report

Major activities accomplished in the fourth quarter of FY 06 are briefly highlighted in this report by PIR. The attached appendices include the performance indicator and country summary tables and trip reports as well as two Case Studies highlighting recent MISTOWA experiences: financial sustainability of ABIPs in Nigeria and linking associations with cellular phone companies.

PIR 1: Improved market information generation and dissemination

1. Agribusiness Information Point (ABIP) training manuals

MISTOWA finalized the technical and business ABIP training manuals. They were "tested" and refined during training sessions in which participants were 220 information officers and potential managers of the ABIPs from the major producer, trader and MIS partners in Benin, Burkina Faso, Ghana, Mali and Nigeria.

2. TradeNet development

The software development team continues to improve the TradeNet by adding and testing new functionalities. These include uploading offers, adding SMS subscriptions to price and offer alerts, and improving the “groups” function. The “groups” function has generated a great deal of interest among producer and trader associations who use it to automatically integrate their websites into the TradeNet platform. Through these websites, the associations can view and share prices, news, offers and other information among the various groups. APCAM in Mali, ANOPACI in Cote d'Ivoire, DMDA in Nigeria, GAPTO in Ghana and many more have already set up their websites and are enjoying the full benefits of having a personalized website (see www.tradenet.biz/groups for more information and up to date list of existing groups).

3. Trade portal use

Trade portal (www.wa-agritrade.net) use has in general increased. This quarter's statistics, summarized below, show increases in the number of visits, SMS requests and prices uploaded. On the other hand, pages viewed, registrations and news stories uploaded decreased over the last quarter.

Table 1: Selected Statistics on the Trade Portal Usage

	Months	July	August	September	Jul-Sep Total	Apr- Jun Total
Statistics tracked						
Visits		25,059	29,426	26,309	80,794	21,887
Pages viewed		10,776	13,372	9,629	33,777	60,134
New registrations		39	13	11	63	257
SMS requests		252	193	177	622	575
prices uploaded		7,493	7372	5,963	20,828	16,263
news stories uploaded		27	24	17	68	92

4. RESIMAO website

RESIMAO has added new functionalities, including SMS alerts, to their website www.resimao.org. They have also added production, export and import statistics and developed a template for a quarterly regional e-newsletter which will “showcase” trends and market analysis.

5. The Nigerian Agricultural Market Information Network (NAMIN)

NAMIN, a coalition of market information service providers, formally registered the network as a limited company under the name “Agri-market Information Network, Nigeria Ltd”. This will enable it enter into a business contract with MTN, the largest cellular telephony company in Nigeria, to disseminate market information to subscribers.

6. Strategy for divestiture and sustainability

In view of the announced reduction in budget and duration of the MISTOWA project, the team developed a strategy for divesting and ensuring the sustainability of the MIS. Broad outlines of the strategy were developed together with the Project Advisory Committee, after which a detailed plan was developed in extensive consultations within the MISTOWA team, including the private sector partner Busylab.

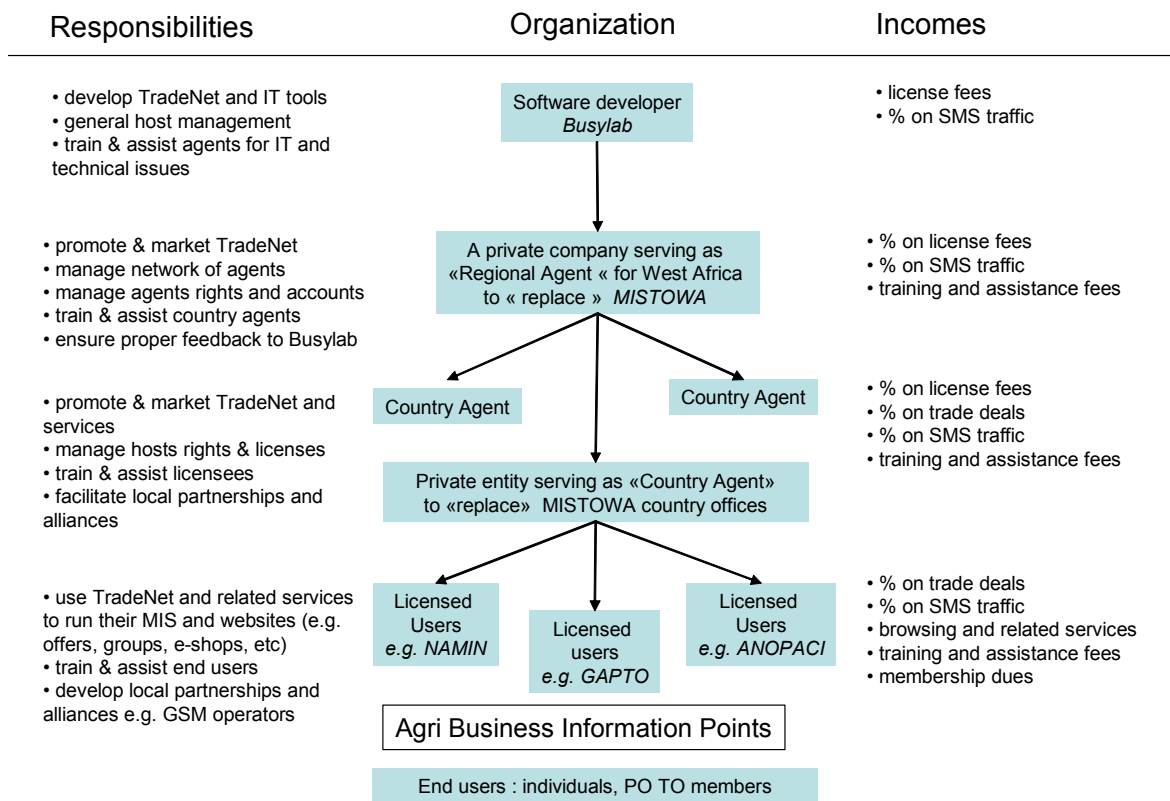
This strategy is two-pronged, consisting of diverging approaches to ensure sustainability for the public and private sector MIS.

For ensuring the future sustainability of RESIMAO, a public sector MIS, MISTOWA plans to divest it to ECOWAS. It is envisioned that within ECOWAS, RESIMAO will function as a specialized agency to

coordinate and manage regional agricultural market information, statistics and policy analysis. In this effort, our partners will be CTA, ZADI, CILSS and the key activities will include:

- Providing RESIMAO, and through them the national feeder MIS, the necessary equipment upgrading, regular training, technical assistance and strategic business planning.
- Ensuring proper implementation of version 3 of www.resimao.org and its new functionalities.
- Expanding the number of countries and markets monitored by RESIMAO to ensure coverage throughout West Africa
- Ensuring the smooth and automated data sharing between RESIMAO platform, TradeNet users and other potential data providers (such as ReSAAKS and FEWSNET). This will provide RESIMAO access to a substantial database for policy and food security analysis and
- Assisting and strengthening RESIMAO advocacy capabilities to promote itself as public sector market information expert that will provide guidance to national and regional policy formulation.

On the other hand, strategy for divesting/sustaining the private sector MIS relies on the use of ABIPs installed within the trade and producer associations. This strategy originates from the evidence that ABIPs can become financially sustainable in a short timeframe. According to this model, ABIPs will provide market information and other services to their members on a pay-for-service basis and using the TradeNet platform. In the model, a private company would play MISTOWA's role as a regional agent. This company would have a well defined relationship with the TradeNet software developer, Ghana-based Busylab. In each of the ECOWAS countries, a private entity would serve as a "country agent" to replace MISTOWA country office, and would sell and distribute licenses to the users (ABIPs) to serve the end users. We expect that using this model, the system will be financially independent and sustainable by the year 2010. An overview of the model is presented in the figure below.



Each partner in the provision of private sector MIS would have specific responsibilities.

Busylab will:

- Maintain and develop the TradeNet software and related applications
- Ensure availability and integrity (security, storage, brand) of data
- Manage the financial and business contracts with its agents (regional and country)

The regional agent will:

- Make TradeNet software available to users (groups, ABIP) and to country agents
- Identify, train and provide technical assistance to country agents
- Manage hosting rights and creating new accounts and websites for country agents
- Provide assistance and training to country agents on use of TradeNet
- Assist and train country agents in building national alliances, partnerships and networking among users and interested stakeholders, e.g., local GSM operators, banks, and donors
- Promote TradeNet to new customers and end users
- Provide feedback to Busylab for the improvement of IT services and development
- Manage funds received by donors during the initial 2008-2010 period.

The country agents will:

- License the TradeNet software to end users (groups), and to country agents.
- Manage hosting rights and creating new accounts and websites
- Provide direct assistance and training to users on use of TradeNet
- Facilitate and/or manage national alliances, partnerships and networking among users and interested stakeholders, e.g., local GSM operators, banks, and donors
- Promote TradeNet to new customers and end users

- Provide feedback to Busylab and regional agent for improvement of IT services and development

MISTOWA's exit strategy involves assuring that necessary structures are put in place during FY 2007, including:

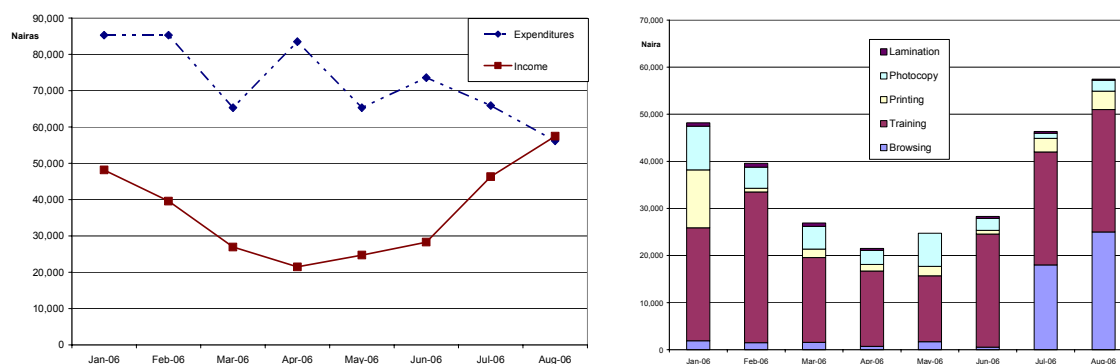
- Ensure proper implementation by Busylab of critical modules on TradeNet (i.e., groups for creation and management of websites for associations; market reports for ABIP; and mobile services)
- Promotion and awareness creation for TradeNet in all 10 countries through live demonstration and distribution of promotional tools, e.g, tip sheets, manuals for SMS services and alerts, face-to-face events, ABIP trainings, and trade fairs
- Further develop and refine with Busylab strategies and proposals for 2008-2012 and
- Identify potential country agents in 6 key countries, and hold a seminar on ways in which TradeNet can become sustainable

PIR 2: Improved trader and producer skills

1. Training of ABIP information officers and managers

MISTOWA trained 220 information officers and potential managers of the Agribusiness Information Points (ABIPs) from the major producer, trader and MIS partners in Benin, Burkina Faso, Ghana, Mali and Nigeria. Participants were trained to use the trade portal and run the ABIP to provide services to members. Emphasis was on making the ABIPs generate enough paid services to their members to cover their costs and sustain member interest in the associations. The success of the DMDA (Kano, Nigeria) in breaking even within six months of operation as ABIP (see graph below) was often used as an example at the ABIP business training sessions to illustrate how to make the ABIP sustainable.

**Evolution of income vs expenditure (left), with breakdown of income by services (right)
DMDA ABIP (Kano, Nigeria) from Jan 2006 to Aug 2006**



In a similar vein, NAMIN in Nigeria, ANOPACI in Cote d'Ivoire, APLS, SOGEMAF and APCAM in Mali, DMDA and Lagos Mile 12 market associations in Nigeria and GAPTO in Ghana show signs of generating sufficient revenues to cover costs while providing services to their members.

2. International MIS training workshop in Cotonou, Benin

The workshop was attended by 40 participants from Benin, Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, Guinea, Mali, Niger, Senegal and Togo. Participants received training on how to operate and finance the ABIPs in ways which enable them to become financially sustainable.

3. Shea quality training workshop

MISTOWA's Shea Activity Coordinator, Marie Laurentine Ilboudo, organized a shea quality training workshop for shea producers from Mali and Burkina Faso. Participants improved their skills in the

production of high quality nuts and butter to obtain premium prices in the local, regional and international markets.

4. HIV/AIDS session for women traders

Gisele, Dovi, MISTOWA gender specialist, conducted a special session on HIV/AIDS to create awareness on the epidemic among women traders at an ICT training in Kaduna, Nigeria.

PIR 3: Improved West African trade environment

1. Agricultural and cultural fair

In collaboration with MISTOWA's Country Coordinator, the national chapter of ROESAO in Togo (CT-ROESAO) organized an agricultural and cultural fair in Kpalime, Togo in August. The fair brought together traders and producers as well as other stakeholders to exhibit produce. The Deputy Chief of Mission of the US Embassy in Togo represented the US Government and made remarks on the US Government's interest in agricultural development and poverty alleviation. He commended the efforts of MISTOWA in contributing to the success of the trade fair. Kofi Debrah demonstrated the use of the TradeNet to stakeholders.

2. Reported trade

Trade of numerous associations has increased during the reporting period, including:

- Sixteen trade associations from Benin, Burkina Faso, Ghana, Mali, Nigeria and Senegal recorded an intra-regional trade involving 56,061 tons of food crops and 66,133 heads of cattle valued at \$51,037,547.
- Traders of DMDA in Kano concluded trade deals in July and August involving white maize and edible groundnut valued at \$81,600. Similarly traders of the Lagos Mile 12 market association concluded white maize and groundnut cake deals in September valued at \$31,920.

3. Advocacy work

Country coordinators organized meetings for the in-country advocacy groups to refine their action plans and to seek local funding for their advocacy work. In Ghana the group applied for the Business Sector Advocacy Challenge Fund (BUSAC) funds to advocate for a transparent implementation of the \$547m Millennium Challenge Compact in which several activities are earmarked for agricultural development and market access. In Nigeria, the National Advocacy Thematic Group met on September 14, 2006 to finalize their workplan and budget and also diversified their funding sources.

Project Management: Grants, M & E and Public Relations Activities

1. Grant administration

Emmanuel Alognikou followed up on grant recipients to obtain reports on their activities. The major activities included identification of appropriate staff to manage the Agribusiness Information Points.

2. M & E

Chris Amedo and Kofi Debrah continue to analyze M & E data from the trade associations selected to report imports and exports of selected commodities.

3. Visitors

Visitors to the Ghana office during this quarter included Professor Obilana Clement Djameh of UNIDO, David Schacht Project Manager, CARANA Corporation and Shashi Kolavalli & Shenggen Fan of IFPRI. In Burkina Faso, notable visitors to Burkina Faso office included Mr. Dard of the Centre de Commerce International (CCI) to discuss market information dissemination through the GSM system. Visitors to the Nigeria office included David Rosenblum, Development Finance International Company USA and Charles

Ojei of DUPONT to discuss issues relating to development value chain in agricultural input trade data and agricultural commodities, Tahirou Yahaye, Country Coordinator FEWSNET to discuss collaboration in MIS activities and Mr. Akin Adesina, Chief Operating Officer of First Chartered Company to discuss micro-credit administration with Lagos Mile 12 Market Association members.

4. Newsletters

The English and French versions of the MISTOWA Newsletter were published in July/August and September/October and distributed as hard copy, through the email list, and through the MISTOWA website.

5. Public Relations and Promotional Activities

Regine Dupuy worked on success stories, newsletters, project brochures, and gender issues. She also carried out representational activities. The gender specialist Gisèle DOVI represented MISTOWA at an international conference in Mexico City, 23-26 September, 2006, where she presented a document, « Permettre aux femmes du secteur agro-alimentaire d'Afrique de l'Ouest d'accroître leurs revenus grâce au TIC, est-ce possible ? L'expérience du projet MISTOWA ». Her participation was fully paid by "Know How 2006," the conference organizers.

6. Reports

Reports produced during this quarter include:

- July, August and September activity reports submitted by MISTOWA coordinators from Benin, Burkina Faso, Ghana, Mali, Nigeria, Senegal and Togo.
- A revised FY 07 work plan was developed and submitted to USAID and partners.
- Trip reports.

Annex 1: Performance Indicator Table

Indicator	Weight	Baseline Year	Baseline Year Data	Progress Direction + or -	FY 2006 Target	FY 2006 Qtr 1 Actual	FY 2006 Qtr 2 Actual	FY 2006 Qtr 3 Actual	FY 2006 Qtr 4 Actual	FY 2006 Actual
<i>a) Annual value of trade of selected products from 20 trade associations supported by MISTOWA increased (\$)</i>	5	2005	120,000,000	+	144,000,000	31,323,540	42,771,032	42,914,239	51,037,547	168,046,630
<i>b) Annual value of trade of selected products reported as deals by project beneficiaries increased (\$)</i>	5	2005	185,221,152	+	214,807,734	2,018,000	18,829,167	2,138,586	1,999,753	24,985,506
Total quarterly value (a + b) of selected products increased (\$)	5	2005	305,221,152	+	358,807,734	33,341,540	61,600,199	45,052,825	53,037,300	193,032,132
Number of countries having compatible MIS	2	2004	0	+	15	10	10	10	10	10
Number of users of MIS	3	2005	103,303	+	206,606	29,622	33,318	33,517	33,475	129,932
Number of hits on partner websites	3	2005	117,085	+	128,794	30,490	59,755	145,200	138,000	373,445
Number of individuals trained	4	2004	46	+	2,010	693	734	377	220	2,024
Analyses produced for regional organizations	1	2005	0	+	1	0	0	1	1	2

Annex 2: Additional Performance Indicator Table 2 (FY 07)

Indicator	Weight	Baseline Year	Baseline Year Data	Progress Direction + or -	FY 2007 Target	FY 2007 Qtr 1 Actual	FY 2007 Qtr 2 Actual	FY 2007 Qtr 3 Actual	FY 2007 Qtr 4 Actual
<i>Number of ABIPs that Break even by Sept 2007</i>	1	2006	0	+	20				
<i>Number of ABIPs that cover 30% of their costs by Sept 2007</i>	1	2006	0	+	50				
Number of visits to ABIPs by Sept 2007	1	2006	TBD	+	TBD				
Number of PO and TO members trained at the ABIPs by Managers by Sept 2007	1	2006	120	+	1000				

Annex 3: Country Summary Table

FY 2006	Country	Qtr	Training (Men, Women)		Event Participation (Men, Women)		Fund Expenditure	Other
			Men	Women	Men	Women		
1	Benin	1	39	32	63	12	72,120	
		2	10	6	7	4	13,338	
		3	20	7	25	10	30,566	
		4	33	5	43	5	42,656	
2	Burkina Faso	1	3	0	4	5	29,820	
		2	10	4	41	22	191,345	
		3	31	10	40	7	49,280	
		4	16	13	30	5	35,840	
8	Gambia	1	0	0	0	0	0	
		2	0	0	3	1	2,400	
		3	3	0	2	2	3,200	
		4	0	0	0	0	0	
9	Ghana	1	8	46	87	49	88,410	
		2	25	19	10	7	28,365	
		3	48	15	55	12	113,351	
		4	14	0	2	0	7,200	
10	Guinea	1	2	0	2	1	4,000	
		2	3	3	4	3	10,400	
		3	0	2	0	0	1600	
		4	0	0	0	0	0	
12	Ivory Coast	1	18	6	1	2	15,000	
		2	2	4	6	3	8,325	
		3	2	1	0	0	5812	
		4	0	0	0	0	0	
13	Liberia	1	0	0	0	0	0	
		2	0	0	0	0	0	
		3	0	0	0	0	0	
		4	0	0	0	0	0	
14	Mali	1	24	7	5	2	25,800	
		2	7	6	4	5	14,938	
		3	8	4	5	3	13,579	
		4	27	6	0	0	22,405	
16	Niger	1	1	0	4	3	4,000	
		2	3	3	5	4	7,500	
		3	0	0	2	0	1,600	
		4	0	0	0	0	0	
17	Nigeria	1	190	89	7	2	96,180	
		2	15	5	16	12	16,032	
		3	101	29	14	7	43,415	
		4	65	28	52	5	56,800	
19	Senegal	1	66	55	24	62	37,980	

FY 2006	Country	Qtr	Training (Men, Women)		Event Participation (Men, Women)		Fund Expenditure	Other
			Men	Women	Men	Women		
			2	8	6	6		
3	12	4	4	2	5,250			
4	0	0	73	20	41,340			
20	Sierra Leone	1	0	0	0	0	0	
		2	0	0	2	2	4,500	
		3	3	0	0	0	3,300	
		4	0	0	0	0	0	
21	Togo	1	3	0	46	9	11,100	
		2	4	2	6	2	2,674	
		3	15	5	2	1	4,400	
		4	0	0	63	43	36,500	
	Total		684	370	502	260	1,098,612	

Annex 4: Case Studies



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CASE STUDY

Nigerian Trade Associations move towards financial sustainability

A project using new information technology—email, the internet, even text-messaging on cellular phones to connect farmers and traders is paying big dividends



Women members of the Cassava Association of the Dawanau Market Development Association (DMDA) being briefed by Gafar Ajao, ABIP Manager at a training session in Kano, Nigeria .

“There was so much interest in the ABIP we decided to purchase additional computers to provide more services”.

Challenge

Project-supported producer and trader associations have a bad track record of continuing to provide services to members when projects end. Not surprisingly, when the USAID-funded Market Information Systems and Traders’ Organizations in West Africa (MISTOWA) project provided equipment grant in the form of computers, internet connectivity and targeted training to 150 associations in 2005 and 2006 to access market information and trade opportunities, some have questioned their ability to become sustainable when MISTOWA ends in 2007.

Initiative

Two trade associations in Nigeria, Dawanau Market Development Association (DMDA) and Lagos Mile 12 Market Association (LM12MA), saw opportunities in the MISTOWA initiative and applied for grants. They were accorded \$43,027 and \$42,827, respectively to purchase computers and accessories, to be connected to the internet and be trained in their use. MISTOWA helped them transform the associations’ offices into Agribusiness Information Points (ABIPs), which serve as meeting points for farmers and traders as places of commodity exchange, training, browsing and business deals. Regarding the ABIPs, Alhaji Imam, the DMDA General Secretary explained, “there was so much interest in the ABIP we decided to purchase additional computers to provide more services”.

Results

Thanks to the collaboration with local media and other promotional activities, each ABIP attracts between 50 and 70 visitors a day. Visitors research prices via the internet or SMS, consult price boards and fact sheets, post offers to sell and bids to buy, meet other traders, are trained or obtain secretarial services. On average, the two ABIPs earn \$2000 per month from services provided. In September 2006, nine months into running the ABIPs, the revenues generated just about covered the costs. The number of new member associations joining the DMDA and LM12M has doubled since January, and according to Paul Iroh, Chairman of the Cereal Traders’ Association of the LM12M, “the services we provide become a pull factor for new members from whom we earn about \$560 in membership revenues per month”. The ABIPs plan on charging 2.5% of the value of every trade deal they facilitate and project \$6,250/month income from trade deal facilitation.



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WEST AFRICA

CASE STUDY

Associations partner with cellular phone companies to disseminate information

Cellular phone companies get excited about prospects of including market information services to attract new types of clients



Yachina Dete explaining how revenue from the partnership will be shared with the associations to Mr. Keita, Executive Secretary of FACIA, the regional association of agricultural input dealers.

“this initiative will bring “new life” to the mobile services and attract more subscribers”.

Challenge

Until recently, the public sector market information systems were the dominant source of market information and agricultural statistics in West Africa. Due to various reasons, farmers and traders who were supposed to be served by these systems were unable to have timely access to information on prices, markets, and supply and demand. The development of a private sector system involving the direct participation of the beneficiaries in information generation and sharing is a daunting challenge.

Initiative

In early 2005, the USAID-funded Market Information Systems and Traders' Organizations in West Africa (MISTOWA) project partnered with BusyLab, a private software company in Ghana to develop a West African Trade portal. This portal, available at www.wa-agritrade.net, is based on the www.tradenet.biz platform that delivers market intelligence via the web, email and SMS. MISTOWA then trained information officers of producer and trader associations to use email, the Internet and text messaging to upload information, offers and bids, make price enquiries and even seek contacts on the trade portal. MISTOWA saw new opportunities in developing partnerships with Cellular phone companies to help promote and direct traffic to the website, while providing new services to subscribers. Patrice Annequin, MISTOWA's Deputy Chief of Party has recently initiated discussions with MTN in Nigeria and Ivory Coast, Areeba in Ghana and Benin, and Malitel in Mali with a combined subscription base of approximately 25 million clients.

Results

NAMIN, the network of six public and private market information services in Nigeria, registered a private company “Agri-market Information Network, Nigeria Ltd” to enter into a business contract with MTN Nigeria. Under the agreement, NAMIN will provide contents (e.g., prices, contacts, alerts, offers, bids) and MTN will disseminate it to subscribers. Fifty percent of the revenues generated will go to NAMIN to ensure continuous flow of information. At a rate of \$ 0.4 per SMS request by 10000 MTN subscribers per week, NAMIN could earn about \$2000 per week. According to Tunji Adeyinka, MTN Nigeria's Senior Business and Marketing Manager, “this initiative will bring ‘new life’ to the mobile services and attract more subscribers”.

Annex 5: Trip Reports

Trip 1: Claudia LaLumia Trip Report Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso, July 5-6, 2006

Purpose of the trip:

- Meeting with CILSS to begin planning the next Crop Outlook Conference
- Meeting with Economic and Commercial Officer at the American Embassy to up-date on MISTOWA activities
- Meeting with Marie-Laurentine and Sami to discuss communication problems between the two of them.
- Meeting with Dr Diawara to discuss PFK/TFK/IRSAT collaboration and get his input on how best to handle the situation in Bobo (deciding where we can do the PICA and in collaboration with whom)

Salient points and Conclusions

- Meeting with CILSS went very well. See summary of the meeting (separate doc.)
- The Economic and Commercial Officer at the American Embassy was welcoming and seemed interested in MISTOWA's objectives and activities. She had already met once with Sami to familiarize with the project. Sami will invite her to up-coming events (PICA training, etc.) and she will try to attend or send someone to do so. We established that Sami should fix a meeting with her every two months or so to give her an up-date on MISTOWA activities in Burkina.
- Meeting with Dr Diawara of IRSAT. Marie Laurentine and Claudia seized the opportunity to introduce Sami to Dr Diawara. This was the first time Sami had been to IRSAT or met Diawara. The Dr. recommends that we do not do two PICAs in Bobo but rather work with PFK and TFK to establish that they will use the same PICA and decide together where best to establish it. ML, Diawara, Sami, PFK and TFK reps will hold a meeting sometime during the shea training (on traceability) July 17,18 or 19th in Bobo to discuss this with the partners and come to a final conclusion together.

Major persons contacted

- Sadie Marie Okoko, Economic and Commercial Officer, American Embassy
- Dr Brehima Diawara, IRSAT
- Moussa Cisse, CILSS
- Mme Yoni, Accountant CILSS

Implications of trip to Project:

- CILSS will collaborate on Corp Outlook Conference organization y giving technical support. Whether they will be able to contribute financially is still unknown (they may know something by end July). We decided to plan the event based on MISTOWA funding only (\$50,000) and if CILSS comes in with more money we can just increase the number of participants (if news does not come too late). See full summary on meeting with CILSS.
- Sami will meet with Mme Okoko once every two months and invite her to major events which she will try to attend.

ML, Dr. Diawara, Sami, PFK and TFK reps will hold a meeting sometime during the shea training (on tracabilite) July 17,18 or 19th in Bobo to discuss this with the partners and come to a final conclusion pertaining to where and with/for whom the PICA will be established.

Trip 2: Dr. Kofi Debrah Trip Report

Muscle Shoals and Washington D.C, July 6, 2006

Purpose of the trip:

- Consultation at Muscle Shoals, Alabama
- Debriefing on MISTOWA progress at USAID Africa Bureau, Washington
- Vacation in between business

Major Conclusions

- MISTOWA-related financial and administrative issues clarified
- Jeff Hill (AFR/SD) has a better understanding of MISTOWA implementation strategy and impacts of intra-regional trade
- Better understanding of IFAD's Market Access and the "First Mile" projects

Itinerary

Jun 20	Amsterdam (11:30) – Atlanta- Huntsville-Muscle Shoals (21:30)
Jun 27	Mucle Shoals – Atlanta - Maryland
Jul 4/5	Maryland – Virginia/Washington DC- Maryland
Jul 8	Maryland (0630) – Atlanta- Amsterdam (07:30)
Jul 9	Amsterdam (11:30) – Accra (1830)

Major persons contacted

- Jeff Hill, AFR/SD, USAID, Washington DC
- Cheryl Morden (Interim Director, North American Liaison Office), IFAD
- Don Crane, IFDC Washington DC

Description of activities

Consultation at IFDC HQ

I discussed MISTOWA progress and obtained the inputs from John Allgood and David Edwards to finalize personal services contracts for newly appointed MISTOWA Focal Points in Niger, Guinea and Ivory Coast. I had working sessions with Debbie Shedd about MISTOWA financial issues and to simplify the reporting of monthly financial expenses. The need to verify expenses incurred and reported from the country offices was stressed.

I briefed Jorge Polo, Ian Gregory, Balu Bumb, Tom Hargrove, Debbie Hellums, Tom Crawford and Dr. Roy on progress and challenges of the MISTOWA project while in Muscles Shoals and left a number of MISTOWA brochures.

Washington DC visit

Don Crane had managed to get audience with Jeff Hill and accompanied me for the MISTOWA debriefing at the Africa Bureau. I gave Mr. Hill a number of MISTOWA folders (including promotional materials, brochures, newsletters and success stories and tip sheets) and took advantage of the one hour meeting to debrief him about MISTOWA progress to date. I emphasized how MISTOWA interventions, including training producers and traders to use ICT tools (internet, emails, SMS) to generate and access market information and face to face events have generated over \$21m trade deals in 44 transactions between Nov 05 and May 06 and how the trade associations we monitor have recorded over \$70m worth of trade. We also discussed how current arrangements being made with mobile phone companies to help disseminate market information could lead to the sustainability of the trade portal. We talked about our exit strategy in which we expect a sub-regional organization or a partner to play the current role of MISTOWA and appealed for continued support as we help the associations grow and become financially sustainable. Don Crane in turn briefed him about the new IFDC project (1000+) and how this and other projects complement MISTOWA-type activities to strengthen the supply chain in West Africa. We discussed the implications of the recent African Fertilizer Summit and the declaration of fertilizer as a strategic input in the sub-region.

Mr. Hill said he was satisfied with the progress made by MISTOWA within the short period of time. He acknowledged that MISTOWA has clearly “done some innovative things to be copied” but according to him even though MISTOWA impacts are “enabling” and are facilitating trade they are not large enough to trigger wholesale intra-regional trade unless other issues related to the entire supply chain, and specifically regulatory issues, infrastructure and policies re addressed simultaneously. He hopes MISTOWA has linked large organizations like the World Food Program to the trade portal, reasoning that WFP is a large buyer and MISTOWA could make more impact with WFP involvement than is currently making. He suggested we make contacts with FEWSNET and the Leyland Initiative to see how MISTOWA could work with them. Other issues raised by Mr. Hill include the role of the public sector in the regulatory system, grades and standards, development of enabling infrastructure and minimizing the negative impacts of policies. He explained the mission’s strategy as one that is looking for an umbrella-type of program capable of addressing the various components (e.g agricultural trade, infrastructure, market information, regulatory issues, private sector, trade financing etc) that will lead to increased agricultural productivity and competition. He said ECOWAS was designing the umbrella program within the context of the CADDAP and a draft could be available for USAID review by September?

After the USAID meeting, I accompanied Don to brief Cheryl Morden of IFAD about MISTOWA and the 1000+ project and the outcome of the Africa Fertilizer Summit. Cheryl in turn briefed us about IFAD’s activities, particularly their thinking on Market Access for the rural poor and the “First Mile” project in Tanzania. The project attempts to bridge the connectivity gap that separates a village with no electricity and no telephone line from the nearest online computer, thus emphasizing rural communities as the starting point of internet connectivity, not the end point. To the extent that IFAD’s market access objective uses ICT to fight rural poverty, and that it works on strengthening producer groups, there are strong similarities and possibilities for collaboration with MISTOWA that we have agreed to explore.

Copies:

Rob Groot, Tom Crawford, John Allgood, Amit Roy, Dan Waterman, S. Roy, A. Maatman, A. Mando, MISTOWA staff, Jeremy Strauss.

Trip 3: Claudia LaLumia and Regine Dupuy’s Trip Report Lome-Togo, July 21-25, 2005

Purpose of the trip:

- Meet with Peace Corps Volunteer in Tchamba that will be working with MISTOWA
- Meet with INADES-Togo to discuss possibility of their facilitating ROESAO Strategic Plan elaboration workshop
- Meet with Baguida gardeners unions to discuss their activities with MISTOWA and plans for PICA establishment and future activities
- Meet with CT-ROESAO to discuss Strategic Plan workshop and their grant request and progress on preparing for their participation at FACI.
- Meet with M. Tchakpedeau at Chamber of Agriculture to discuss activities and plan for implementing PICAs at Chamber of Ag (National and regional levels) in Togo.

Major persons contacted

- Dan Mueller, Peace Corps SBD Volunteer
- Members of UGROMA gardeners’ group
- Members of UGMCK gardeners’ group
- Mr. DeSouza, member CT-ROESAO, Responsable filiere huile/olagineaux
- Alidou Alassani, President CT-ROESAO
- Mme Salakoe Essinam, Treasurer CT-ROESAO
- M. Agessi Kofi, Secetaire a l’Organisation, Information et Formation CT-ROESAO
- M Tchakpedeau, Charge d’Information et Communication RECAO, Responsable RECAO Togo
- M. Amona Kouame,
- M. Adufu, Directeur General INADES Togo

Salient points and Conclusions

- The Peace Corps Volunteer received us among a group of producers and traders in Tchamba and asked us to explain the project to them all. We did this and the people were interested in the project and hope that they will be able to collaborate through Dan or the new PCV that will be replacing him. Dan had obviously researched on the MISTOWA and tradenet sites in addition to talking to Raoul previously, as he seemed to have a good idea of the project. He had invited producers, traders, the local and rural radio, a local cashew processing plant manager, the market depot representative and others to the meeting. There seem to be good possibilities for including Tchamba in MISTOWA activities. They produce a lot of maize, cashew, soya, sesame and manioc for export to Benin and Ghana but have difficult finding buyers for all their produce. The cashew processing plant has started in the last two years and they too are struggling so find buyers for their finished product. At least one person has already been trained in PICA management and there is a functional cybercafé in Tchamba that could serve as an information point. We drew up a tentative schedule for Dan's starting month with MISTOWA. He will start work at IFDC office in Lome on August 21st.
- The members of UGROMA and UGMCK we met with expressed that they have a serious problem finding buyers for their vegetable produce. They have some clients from Ghana and Benin but the few that come do not buy all and they are often forced to sell at a loss or very low profit. Several members have been trained in ICT and use of the tradenet internet site and they are scheduled to host a PICA in three locations (with three Unions- one of which was not present at our meeting as they are farther away from the others). They would like to receive their equipment ASAP and are eager to get started. Other possibilities with this group could be exchange visits to Nigeria or Ghana, or even linking them to Dapaong once Dan is in place there to see about possibilities of supplying the northern region. Certain members also participated during advocacy meetings and trainings.
- CT-ROESAO: Essentially the meeting was to discuss three points and we met with the President, Treasurer, Secretary for Organisation, Information and Training, the PICA Informaticien, and the Responsible for the Oil products Chain. The three points discussed: 1) Possibility for doing the strategic plan workshop in Togo with INADES. I gave them an update on all that has transpired since Bamako meeting with ROESAO. They were pleased with the possibility of doing the workshop in Togo. 2) We discussed their request for a competitive grant to assist their participation at FACI this year. I asked them many questions about where they are in the preparatory phase now. Apparently they have advanced quite. They have already contacted organizations to confirm their participation; identified the food chains that will bring products to demonstrate, show, taste; designed banners, posters and gathered photos to be used to decorate their booth; created several films on ROESAO activities to be projected at their booth; invited someone to do soy transformation; prepared for radio emissions that they hope to solicit during the event; contacted a folkloric group to discuss their contracting them to do some culture manifestation; and contacted the people from whom they will rent equipments (video, TV, etc.). It seems they have really invested a lot of time and energy into preparing for FACI. They need to know if MISTOWA is going to approve the grant request. I told them I would follow up on this in Accra and try to ensure that they receive an answer by August 10 to permit their continued planning and preparation.
- Chamber of Agriculture: We met with Mr. Tchakpedeau to discuss in general the Chamber's activities in Togo. Since the RECAO SIM training in Accra each national chamber of agriculture was supposed to put together a plan for establishing PICAs in their country and submit this to RECAO headquarters in Mali (at the time of Timbo). Mr. Tchakpedeau explained that he has not had the time to do this at all. He recently went to RECAO meeting in Dakar where each country learned that they will receive about 900,000 Fcfa for connectivity. The problem in Togo is that that amount is not enough to up-grade what they have so he is waiting and researching other cost sharing opportunities with ICAT and possibly other offices in the direct vicinity of their office. We advised that he request that his funds be transferred to the CoA Togo to ensure their availability when he needs them.
- INADES-Togo: We met with the Director and his assistant/trainer twice to introduce and discuss in more detail the ROESAO strategy plan training. The second time we went over a rough document and budget the Director had prepared. In general they seem to have the competency and experience necessary to do the job and they seem very reasonable in price. As they are quite busy they can only to the workshop in early September. This is alright though because the AWP workshop will be postponed and there is not rush to get the strategy plan done before the scheduled September 4-8 ROESAO workshop date.

Implications of trip to Project:

- MISTOWA needs to prepare for arrival of PCV in Lome (identify lodging). The PCV will be involved in CT-ROESAO involvement in FACI and we may want to consider sending him to the Cotonou MIS training depending on the content and appropriateness for him. When he goes to post in Dapaong MISTOWA should accompany him and introduce him to RAFIA and partners.
- MISTOWA needs to quickly review CT-ROESAO proposal for grant funds to help them attend FACI.
- The same applied for the grant to conduct the strategic plan workshop for regional ROESAO. This should be done as soon as possible to allow for proper preparation of the workshop.
- The gardeners' groups (three unions) are waiting for their equipment grant to come in. This too should be reviewed and decided upon as soon as possible.

Trip 4: Dr Kofi Debrah and Joel Dossoumon Trip Report
Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso, September 25, 2006

Purpose of the trip:

- Consultation with ABIP partners in Koforidua, Kumasi, Techiman and Tamale
- Mini-ABIP training for partners in Burkina Faso
- Consultative meetings with CILSS, ROPPA, UEMOA and US Embassy in Ouagadougou
- Participate in IFDC Program and Project Leaders' meeting to identify synergies and complementarities

Major Conclusions

- The ABIPs and e-Commerce information centers are working satisfactorily to provide information services to their clients. Managers advised to work towards sustainability
- Project progress, funding situation and future activities discussed with partners, including the USDA representative in Dakar and the US Embassy personnel. Views and suggestions to best maintain key activities were discussed.
- Complementarity among IFDC projects in the various countries discussed and modalities of collaboration discussed

Itinerary

Sep 18	Accra – Koforidua – Kumasi
Sep 19	Kumasi – Techiman - Tamale
Sep 20	Tamale - Ouagadougou
Sep 23	Ouagadougou - Accra

Major persons contacted

- Potential ABIP (Agribusiness Information Point) Managers:
 - Tharzia Akwetey and the Municipal Director of Agriculture in Koforidua, Ghana
 - Alhaji Moro and Executives of the Cattle Dealers' Association in Kumasi, Ghana
 - Ofosu Denkyira, Representatives of the Municipal Chief Executive, Techiman, Ghana
- Victor Clotley and Paul Sari, IFDC, Tamale, Ghana
- Sadie Okoko (US Embassy, Burkina Faso) and Robert Hanson, USAID Agricultural Attaché based in Dakar, Senegal
- Partners, including those who will manage the Agribusiness Information Points in Burkina Faso
 - APPROSSA/AV, ONRIZ, BNCRA (RECAO), SONAGESS (RESIMAO), CNB-ROESAO (ROESAO), CPF (ROPPA) and Trade Point (SIGOA-TOPS).
- Ousseini Ouedraogo and the technical team at ROPPA
- Alioune Kone, Keffing Sissoko, Rasmane Ouedraogo, Mme Sawadogo and Mr Amdou, CILSS
- Mr. Houkoue, Chief of Cabinet, Rural Development Commission, UEMOA.

Description of activities

Meetings in Ghana, en route to Ouagadougou

Joel and I visited the Mobile2i (a mobile internet system on USB key) at the Silver Towers near the airport in Accra for a demonstration. The one-time investment which costs about \$200 has a self-installing software and is powered by KASAPA (a GSM company) credit. No need for ISP subscription nor are there hidden costs. Can be used by our associations' ABIPs provided they have the KASAPA coverage.

At Koforidua, we visited the e-commerce center (a potential ABIP) and had discussions with Tharzia and the Municipal Director of Agriculture. We "coached" Tharzia on how to make the services attractive and how to handle the meeting with market women planned for the next day. They have internet connectivity problem related to poor telephone lines. We propose to provide the Mobile2i system as back-up because Koforidua is covered by KASAPA.

At Kumasi, we visited the Cattle Dealers Association premises where the computer is installed. Alhaji Moro, the associations' information officer is quite competent in operating the system and guided us through the associations' cattle trade database. They are interested in using the Mobile 2i system because they do not have a landline and Kumasi is covered by KASAPA.

At Techiman, the e-commerce/ABIP manager, Ofosu Dankyira accompanied us to the Municipal Chief Executive where I explained the concept and demonstrated price requests using the cellular phone. They were very impressed and asked that we discuss to what extent the Assembly can help promote the center.

Meetings in Ouagadougou

Joel Dossoumon, ICT expert had a mini training session for seven managers of the priority ABIPs identified in Burkina Faso. He later visited each of the partners individually to work with them on how to manage the ABIPs and to answer any questions they had. Joel also set up three partners' web sites as "group" functionality within the TradeNet.

US Embassy/USDA Attaché

At the request of Sadie Okoko, the MISTOWA team made a presentation for the benefit of the USDA Agricultural Attaché, Robert Hanson based in Dakar, Senegal. Mr Hanson's visit was to meet key partners in the cotton sector, introduce himself to the stakeholders and get to know what projects are of relevance to his work. After presentation of the project and its achievements, he asked questions as to the role of grades and standards as well as SPS issues related to the commodities we follow. Sadie is pleased that the MISTOWA project has in recent times made direct efforts to keep her and the embassy informed about our activities.

ROPPA

At ROPPA, the technical team, led by Ousseini Ouedraogo had discussions with the MISTOWA team (Kofi Debrah and Charles Nouatin) related to equipment grant allocation to the national platforms, much improved involvement of ROPPA in project implementation, and the installation of the ABIPs at ROPPA headquarters and in countries having organizations representing ROPPA.

CILSS

Met with Alioune Kone and technical staff. Mr. Kone was acting for the Executive Secretary and his Deputy, both out of the country on official mission. We informed them of the budget situation and invited them to use the MIS resources at CILSS to bridge the gap. Mr. Rasmane Ouedraogo explained the difficulties they had in mobilizing these funds last year and promised things will be much better managed this year. He displayed a high sense of understanding of how the ABIPs are working and how this fits into their objective of using market information to increase intra-regional trade. Mr Ouedraogo and Mr Cisse will visit MISTOWA in Accra to discuss this further.

UEMOA

Mr. Houkoue, Chief of Cabinet, Rural Development Commission, UEMOA received us. We updated him on the project progress and informed him about the budget situation. He praised the project's achievements and advised that we continue to work with UEMOA and ECOWAS within the framework of the agricultural policies.

IFDC Project/Program Leaders' Meeting

This meeting brought together project and program leaders from Burkina Faso, Mali, Nigeria and Ghana. The meeting was under the leadership of Rob Groot, Director of the Africa Division. The meeting reviewed how the IFDC projects can mobilize the synergies to work for the realization of common objectives. This meeting was a side meeting held during the annual work planning meeting for the MIR project.

Copies:

Rob Groot, Tom Crawford, John Allgood, Amit Roy, Dan Waterman, S. Roy, A. Maatman, A. Mando, MISTOWA staff, Jeremy Strauss, Robert Kagbo.

Trip 5 : Patrice Annequin Trip Report Abidjan, Cote D'Ivoire, September 24-29, 2006

Objectifs de la mission:

- Rencontrer les partenaires de MISTOWA en Cote d'Ivoire: ANOPACI, OCPV, Chambre d'Agriculture, ROESAO
- Rencontrer les partenaires existants et potentiels pour la mise en œuvre des programmes du MISTOWA, en particulier pour la mise en place du SIM et des PICA : FIRCA, ANADER, MTN
- Réaliser les achats et la remise des équipements informatiques dans le cadre du programme de subvention accordé au RESIMAO et au RECAO

Principales Conclusions

1. le SIM de l'ANOPACI a tous les atouts pour se développer et être durable dans moins de 2 ans en mettant en œuvre la stratégie PICA (PIV) et un partenariat avec un opérateur GSM local (MTN)
2. les perspectives d'un accord de partenariat entre l'ANOPACI et MTN Côte d'Ivoire sont bonnes et très intéressantes. MISTOWA et Busylab doivent assister de près l'ANOPACI, et faire de même dans les autres pays où les contacts avec MTN existent (Ghana, Bénin, Nigéria).
3. les partenariats et les alliances possibles sont nombreux (CTA, FIRCA, OCPV, MTN, CANCI) mais demandent que des actions de communication et de formation soient menées de manière coordonnée (réunions d'information des partenaires, rencontres mensuelles, formations des PIV, promotion des services du SIM, etc)
4. les équipements informatiques ont été remis à l'OCPV et la Chambre d'Agriculture dans le cadre du programme de subvention accordé au RESIMAO et au RECAO

Itinéraire

Sept 24 Accra (13h30) – Abidjan (14h30)

Sept 29 Abidjan (15h30) – Accra (16h30)

Principales personnes rencontrées

- ANOPACI : Séraphin BIATCHON, secrétaire exécutif
- CANCI : Alexis NGUESSAN ZIKRE, secrétaire exécutif
- OCPV : Noel Bi KOUABLE, Conseiller Technique du SIM
- ANADER : Daniel GLOUNAHO, chef de division Appui aux Filières et aux OPA
- FIRCA : Yao Léon ATSIN, directeur du département Suivi des Programmes
- MTN : Xavier ABOUANOU, directeur commercial

Description des activités

24/09 – réunion de travail à l'ANOPACI

Rencontre avec l'équipe du Secrétariat Exécutif de l'ANOPACI (sauf F Agnimou, en voyage), et de Sylvain Kouao, membre du conseil d'administration et en charge des relations avec le CTA.

Suite à la réception en Août 2006 de la première tranche des équipements de la subvention d'équipement, le SIM ANOPACI a immédiatement engagé l'extension de son réseau de 8 à 15 PIV et des activités liées (installation des ordinateurs, connexions Internet, collecte des prix, échanges d'information, etc).

Nous avons discuté des conséquences des réductions budgétaires de l'USAID, qui rendent incertain le versement du solde de cette subvention et très peu probables les appuis supplémentaires par les subventions compétitives (voyage d'étude, formations).

C'est pour contrebalancer ces réductions que l'ANOPACI (S. Kouao, Innocent) et moi-même avons entrepris depuis plusieurs semaines de travailler avec le CTA (Ibrahim Tiémogo) à la redéfinition de l'appui du CTA à l'ANOPACI pour que les activités financées sur les exercices 2006 et 2007 puissent contribuer au bon fonctionnement des PIV et du SIM – en particulier formations techniques, diffusion et promotion. Les propositions révisées seront soumises cette semaine au CTA pour accord (document disponible).

Au cours des discussions, 3 activités possibles ont été identifiées

1. film documentaire sur le SIM ANOPACI avec l'appui du CTA. Il serait intéressant de faire de ce projet de documentaire de l'ANOPACI une suite logique du documentaire produit par le CTA en collaboration avec le MISTOWA en 2005. L'ANOPACI est un bon exemple des stratégies, des outils et des activités qui ont été effectivement mis en œuvre pour résoudre les problèmes identifiés dans le film de 2005. *A suivre avec S. Bel (CTA)*
2. voyage d'étude en Afrique du Sud. Initialement proposé par et pour l'ANOPACI pour un voyage en Inde, un voyage d'étude regroupant 10 à 15 représentants de SIM d'Afrique de l'Ouest en Afrique du Sud serait plus pertinent. Il serait en ligne avec les travaux et les conclusions du séminaire du CTA à Amsterdam en Novembre 2005. *Contactez le CTA et les représentants sud africains rencontrés en 2005 pour voir comment financer et organiser un tel voyage.*
3. participation à la foire agricole de Côte d'Ivoire. Prévu début décembre à Abidjan, une participation de l'ANOPACI serait une excellente occasion de démontrer les services info com du SIM (demos TradeNet, SMS, etc), de faire connaître le SIM et le réseau de PIV. Cela pourrait être l'occasion de lancer officiellement le site www.anopaci.org (basé sur les fonctions « groupes » de TradeNet) et de rendre public le partenariat ANOPACI / MTN s'il est conclu. *Etudier les possibilités d'une subvention compétitive sur la base d'un budget à préparer en Octobre.*

25/09 – rencontre avec l'ANADER

Réunion avec Mr Daniel GLOUNAHO, chef de division Appui aux Filières et aux OPA en compagnie de S. Biatchon, K. Nda et Innocent.

L'Agence Nationale pour Développement Rural est le service de vulgarisation agricole de l'Etat Ivoirien, couvrant 55 zones avec 1600 agents de développement rural. L'ANADER est un des principaux partenaires de l'ANOPACI dans la mise en œuvre du SIM ANOPACI. Il fournit des animateurs de PIV (ADR dont les salaires sont payés par l'ANOPACI), héberge les PIV et contribue au fonctionnement (motos, carburants, etc). L'ANADER fait partie du comité de coordination qui définit, programme et assure le suivi évaluation du projet SIM.

25/09 – rencontre avec le FIRCA

Réunion avec Mr Yao Léon ATSIN, directeur du département Suivi des Programmes du Fonds Ivoirien pour la Recherche et le Conseil Agricole, accompagné de S. Biatchon, K. Nda et Innocent.

Le financement du FIRCA est assuré par des cotisations des différentes filières et pourrait lever jusqu'à 40 milliards de FCFA par an de budget. Le SIM est un des programmes transversaux inscrit dans les priorités du FIRCA – et pourrait bénéficier d'un budget de près de 300 millions de FCFA.

Des discussions, il apparaît que les activités et les réalisations du SIM ANOPACI ne sont pas assez connues, alors que le FIRCA s'y montre extrêmement intéressé – ma présence et l'appui de MISTOWA à l'ANOPACI ayant renforcé cette confiance et cet intérêt.

Un travail préalable bien programmé de relations publiques, de visites sur le terrain, etc est à faire par l'ANOPACI en direction du FIRCA avant de pouvoir soumettre un programme pour financement.

26/09 – visite du PIV ANOPACI et de la radio communautaire d'Alépé

Rencontre avec KONAN Kan Bernard, chef de zone ANADER, AVIT Moïse, animateur du PIV et XXX, directeur de Radio Lépin, en compagnie de Innocent et Kouame N'Da.

Le PIV d'Alépé est un des 8 premiers PIV installé par l'ANOPACI. Il est logé dans les locaux de la zone ANADER, qui a 3 PC, des imprimantes et une connexion Internet à bas débit (en fait, très bas ! moins de 10 kb/s).

Le PIV a presque tous les atouts pour devenir un PICA opérationnel : du personnel très bien formé et sensibles aux problèmes de services d'information et de durabilité financière, des équipements en bon état, un relais efficace avec la radio pour les informations et la promotion des services d'information, la possibilité juridique et technique de vendre et de gérer des services de type PICA (cyber, formation, conseil, etc). Son relatif éloignement du marché (500 m) et la taille du marché et de la ville (surtout comparé à Mile 12 ou DMDA) sont ses principales contraintes.

Nous avons recommandé que (1) un tableau PICA type soit prêt au plus tard pour la formation PICA d'octobre (2) l'on identifie le problème du débit de la connexion Internet (3) les prix soient transmis par l'APIV par SMS car plus rapide et moins cher (4) le PIV commence à recenser et poster des offres d'achat et de vente locales sur les tableaux et sur TradeNet (5) des messages de promotion soient passés à la radio.

27/09 – rencontre avec MTN Cote d'Ivoire

Réunion que j'ai organisée avec Xavier ABOUANOU, directeur commercial et Mamadou NDIAGNE, responsable comptes entreprises, accompagné de S. Biatchon et Innocent.

Sur la base de l'expérience et des montages proposés entre MTN Nigeria et NAMIN, j'ai développé une proposition en 4 points adaptées aux conditions de la Côte d'Ivoire (voir document joint) qui a été présentée par l'ANOPACI à la direction commerciale de MTN Cote d'Ivoire (1,2 millions d'utilisateurs, 45% du marché ivoirien derrière Orange, 135 milliards de CA dont 1 avec les SMS).

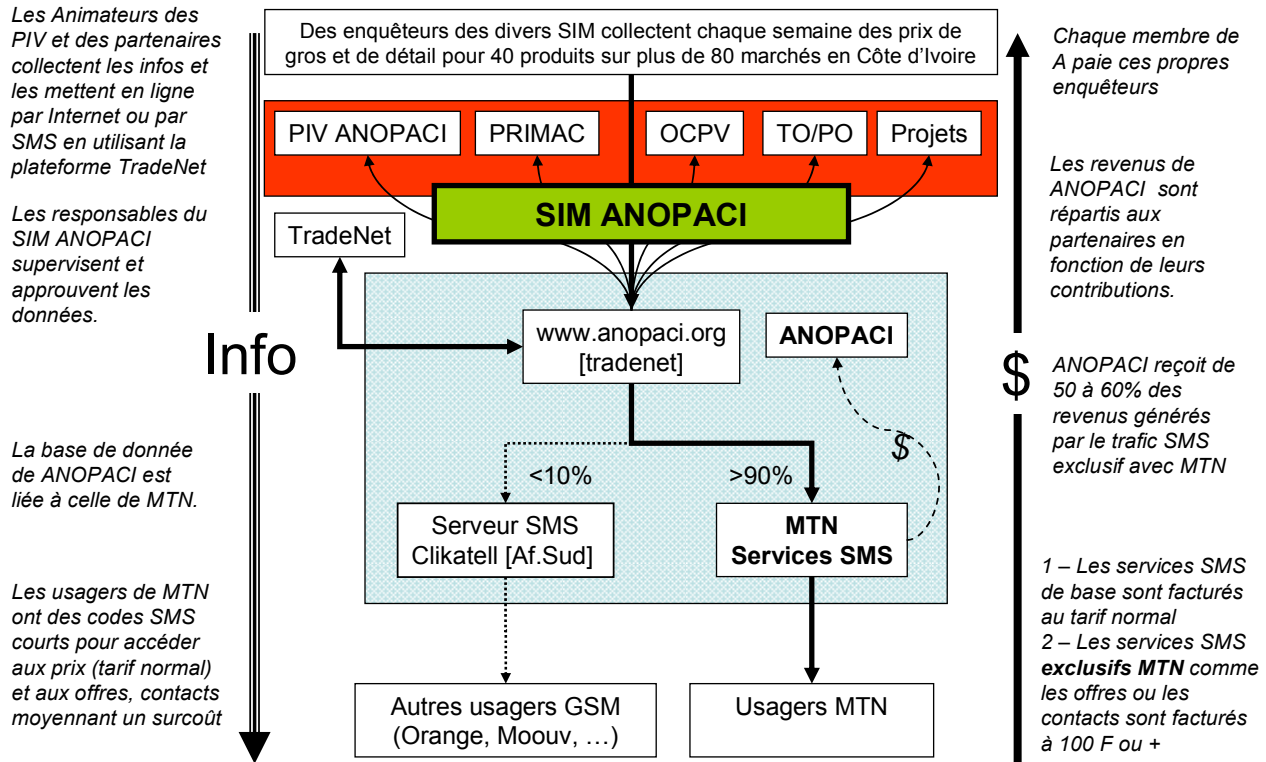
Proposition 1 : services d'information de marché par SMS, en 2 phases [d'abord les prix par requête, puis les prix et les offres sur alertes, abonnements, etc], permettant de diffuser les informations du SIM et de générer des revenus sur le trafic SMS et les services proposés.

Proposition 2 : contrat « corporate » pour l'ANOPACI, afin de pouvoir communiquer gratuitement sur mobile entre le Secrétariat Exécutif, les associations membres de l'ANOPACI et les PIV

Proposition 3 : forfaits de 100 SMS gratuits par mois pour les abonnés de l'ANOPACI au contrat corporate, permettant aux PIV de mettre en ligne les prix et réaliser des démonstrations aux usagers.

Proposition 4 : points de vente de produits et services MTN dans les 15 PIV, tels que ventes de cartes recharges, de cartes SIM, transferts d'unités, etc, afin de générer des revenus (PICA).

Proposition 1 : services d'information de marché par SMS avec MTN



La rencontre a été extrêmement positive et MTN s'est montré très intéressé [2 h !] par l'ensemble de ce dossier sur lequel ils ont promis de donner suite vers le 15 octobre, avec des propositions concrètes. Deux options sont envisageables selon la direction de MTN :

- des contrats sur des bases purement commerciales pour chacune des propositions
- des appuis par la Fondation MTN, destinée à supporter l'«entreprise citoyenne MTN» par des actions sociales diverses. Les fonds sont générés par MTN et correspondent à 5% de la masse salariale du groupe basé en Afrique du Sud [10 pays et plus de 50 millions d'abonnés].

D'ici le 15 octobre, il faut affiner et détailler les propositions (ANOPACI avec MISTOWA), bien maîtriser toutes les fonctions prix/SMS de TradeNet (ANOPACI), préparer une rencontre MTN / Busylab à Abidjan (MISTOWA) pour les aspects techniques. Ayant des contacts avec MTN au Ghana, au Bénin, au Nigeria et en Côte d'Ivoire, je recommande que MISTOWA (Annequin) et Busylab (Davies) contactent la Fondation MTN pour présenter le projet et les actions en cours.

27 & 28/09 – Remise des équipements à l'OCPV et à la Chambre d'Agriculture de Côte d'Ivoire

Dans le cadre du programme de subvention accordé au RESIMAO et au RECAO, j'ai remis

- 2 portables, 1 vidéo projecteur, 1 imprimante laser, 4 cartouches et 1 routeur wifi à KOUABLE Bi Noel, Conseiller Technique du SIM de l'OCPV, membre du RESIMAO.
- 1 portable, 1 imprimante laser et 4 cartouches à NGUESSAN ZEKRE Alexis, secrétaire exécutif et Mme KOFFI Kati, chargée d'information et de communication de la Chambre d'Agriculture de Côte d'Ivoire, membre du RECAO.

Toujours en restructuration, la CANCI envisage de répertorier les OPA et les membres de la CA, avec un appui du PRIECA. Assurer que ce répertoire sera compatible avec celui de la CA du Bénin (O. Kadiri) en cours et le TradeNet, et en coordination avec le RECAO (MISTOWA : CN, YD).

Il reste à l'OCPV comme à la CANCI à obtenir très rapidement une connexion Internet fiable, qui peut être appuyé par les subventions (RESIMAO, RECAO, MISTOWA : EA). J'ai recommandé un passage en wifi + ADSL à la CANCI pour les 4 ou 5 ordinateurs existants (MISTOWA : YD).

28/09/06 - Visite du Marché Gouro d'Adjamé (Abidjan)

C'est sur le Marché Gouro que sont commercialisés la plupart des fruits, légumes et produits vivriers pour la capitale. Nous avons rencontré Mme Irène Lou IRIE, présidente de la COCOPROVI – ancienne et déçue du ROESAO – dont l'association a levé auprès des banques (commerciales, BAD) et des bailleurs plusieurs milliards de FCFA pour construire un marché moderne et un ensemble de services.

L'OCPV envisagerait d'installer un enquêteur à temps plein sur place. Tous les éléments sont en fait réunis pour que la COCOPROVI abrite un PICA très opérationnel ! A discuter aussitôt que possible au cours d'une rencontre à organiser par l'ANOPACI avec l'OCPV et la COCOPROVI.

28/09 – débriefing avec l'ANOPACI

Les principales recommandations pour action sont les suivantes :

- **Communiquer plus auprès des partenaires** en organisant à l'ANOPACI plusieurs réunions d'information d'une demi journée chacune pour présenter le SIM et les outils existants et en projet (TradeNet, PIV/PICA, sites web, services SMS, etc). Pour les partenaires du SIM : FIRCA, ANADER, CNRA ; pour les 12 associations membres de l'ANOPACI ; pour les partenaires potentiels : ROESAO, OCPV, CACI, etc. Ces réunions doivent ensuite être tenues sur des bases régulières (mensuelles).
- **Communiquer plus auprès des usagers** : utiliser le réseau des PIV et des radios pour faire plus connaître le SIM et ses services aux usagers, et principalement les producteurs agricoles membres de l'ANOPACI. Envisager la participation de l'ANOPACI à la foire agricole de Décembre avec lancement officiel du site web anopaci.org, démonstrations en ligne des services SMS
- **Former les PIV et les autres PICA** en Octobre 2006 ayant au moins un tableau PICA au siège de l'ANOPACI et dans le PIV d'Alépé au moment de la formation PICA. Le contenu devra être très pratique compte tenu du niveau de compétence des PIV. Il est essentiel que le secrétariat exécutif « montre l'exemple » en produisant et en affichant – chaque semaine ! - des documents et des services tels que des rapports de marché, des tableaux et graphiques de prix, en imprimant et en diffusant les offres via TradeNet, ou en mettant à jour le site web de l'ANOPACI (www.tradenet.biz/anopaci, ou www.anopaci.org).
- **Préparer le dossier de MTN** le plus professionnellement possible en assurant notamment une bonne maîtrise du TradeNet, et que les prix sont régulièrement disponibles à partir des 15 PIV. Préparer une mission de Busylab fin Octobre / début Novembre.