

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

**First Quarterly Report (October – December 2005)**

**Submitted to**

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**by**



***An International Center for Soil Fertility  
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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
ICT	Information and Communications Technology
IDRC	International Development Research Center
IFDC	An International Center for Soil Fertility and Agricultural Development
IITA	International Institute for Tropical Agriculture
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
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)
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
WABNET	West African Businesswomen Network
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)**

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### **Executive Summary**

USAID/WARP awarded IFDC a \$14.4 million cooperative agreement in August 2004 to implement a 4-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: 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 including road harassment at the borders. This report covers the period, October to December 2005, and is the first formal quarterly project report in FY 2006.

The major events of the quarter were:

- a study tour to Kenya for public sector MIS officials from Burkina Faso, Ghana, Niger and Nigeria to learn best practices in public and private sector market information generation and dissemination.
- a shea nut/butter trade forum organized in Burkina Faso in which over 100 stakeholders of the supply chain from eight countries participated and made trade deals
- training for 354 men and 235 women including producers and traders from Benin, Burkina Faso, Ivory Coast, Ghana, Guinea, Mali, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal and Togo to enhance skills to use the computer and ICT tools (Internet, SMS etc) to generate and disseminate information and improve business transactions.

Successes from the intervention include:

- a producer association in Senegal (FPMN) and a trader association in Benin (UDOPER) used knowledge gained from ICT trainings to convert ledger-based, handwritten membership records and business transactions to computer-based (Excel) recordkeeping, enabling them to do basic analysis.
- individual producer and trader beneficiaries from MISTOWA ICT trainings are using email to improve their internal and external communications.
- 8 traders who benefited from the ICT training in Kano purchased their own PCs and accessories valued at \$20,000 in order to enhance their computer skills and become more competitive in their trade deals
- ICT trainees now easily link up with business associates, establish new business contacts, and track purchases and sales. Some examples include:
  - 3 traders from the Lagos Mile 12 International Market in Nigeria made business contacts through the internet and concluded trade deals involving 100 tons of maize valued at \$24,000
  - 2 traders from the Dawanau Market Development Association in Kano, Nigeria transacted business with buyers from Togo and Niger, in maize and cassava chips worth \$10,000.
  - a member of the Federal Capital Agricultural Input Traders' Association in Nigeria contacted BUCCO Company in India and made business deals on organic fertilizer, valued at \$11,000 and became the BUCCO representative in Nigeria.
- at the shea trade forum in Burkina Faso deals involving over 26,000 tons of shea nuts were concluded.

- a 67% increase in the use of the regional trade information portal [www.wa-agritrade.net](http://www.wa-agritrade.net) over the previous quarter was recorded.

## Manager's Report

Major activities accomplished in the first quarter of FY 06 included the following:

### ***PIR 1: Increased Efficiency of Regional MIS***

- As a follow-up to the international MIS and ICT training organized by IFDC in Accra in June 2005, Patrice Annequin and Chris Amedo led a delegation of 7 representatives of West African MIS on a study tour to learn best practices in information generation and dissemination in Kenya from October 8-15, 2005. The delegation included 3 officers from electronic commerce centers from Ghana's Ministry of Food and Agriculture, one officer each from NAMIS and IITA in Nigeria and 2 officers from RESIMAO network affiliates in Burkina Faso and Niger. The delegation visited wholesale and retail markets in Nairobi as well as MIS institutions (the Kenya Agricultural Commodity Exchange (KACE), the Ministry of Agriculture and the RATES project). It also participated in the First Regional Grain Trade Summit. The highlight of the tour was the visit to KACE's Market Information Point (MIP) at Machakos. Apart from providing market information, the MIP also serves as a business center and center for disseminating agricultural extension messages and demonstrations. The delegates resolved to transfer the knowledge gained, especially the market information point concept to their respective countries. On their return, the Ghanaian delegates submitted requests to their respective District Directors of Agriculture to upgrade their e-commerce centers by providing additional equipment like fax machines, VCR, television sets etc so that they may better provide vital services to their clients.
- MISTOWA made an assessment of the agricultural information centers in Ghana with the view to using them as "Market Information Points" for traders, producers and the general public for assessing information on the MISTOWA trade portal and other pertinent information.
- RESIMAO organized a regional workshop on 'Adapting information collection methods to the evolution of markets' with technical support from MISTOWA, ZADI and CTA. The workshop, held in Cotonou from November 14-18, 2005 was attended by representatives of private MIS providers, regional trade associations (FACIA, ROESAO), regional producer organizations (ROPPA and RECAO) and the Community Computing Center of ECOWAS. Issues concerning the use of local units of measurement, harmonized methods of data collection, analysis and dissemination were thoroughly discussed. The Nigerian national MIS became the newest member of RESIMAO.
- The portal [www.wa-agritrade.net](http://www.wa-agritrade.net) registered 64,262 "hits" during the quarter representing a 67% increase over the 38,533 recorded in the previous quarter.

### ***PIR 2: Improved capacities of Regional Trader and Producer Organizations***

- MISTOWA hired Jim Stannelle, an associations building consultant to train producer and trader associations in sustainable associations' management. Fifteen associations, involving a total of 121 participants from Ghana and Nigeria, were trained. The training focused on the identification of the main elements to be considered in the establishment of an effective management structure, relationship with the public sector decision makers, advocacy and lobbying strategies in trade associations. The training offered the associations the opportunity to interact, exchange contacts and share challenges they face in their respective associations. In Ghana for example, the executives of the various associations decided to form an "association's council" to network and coordinate the activities of all the associations.
- The Apex Farmers' Organization of Ghana (APFOG), a potential member of the regional level producers' organization, ROPPA, held organizational management training for its members. Fifty participants including 8 women from sixteen different farmer organizations from the southern

sector of Ghana benefited from the training held in Accra from December 12-14, 2005. Participants were trained to develop effective and realistic action plans, to write viable project proposals, to prepare high-quality reports and to build partnerships for the financial sustainability of their organizations. Working groups identified specific problems in their organizations, prepared draft proposals to address them and presented them during the plenary session. The proposals were fine-tuned by the facilitators and given to the various groups as a working document.

- MISTOWA supported a General Assembly from December 1-2, 2005 for the Ghana Agricultural Producers and Traders Organization (GAPTO) at the Teacher's Hall in Accra. GAPTO is well-known in the markets of Accra. The organization is recognized for its member oriented services to its members, such as facilitating the importation of onions from Niger and assistance in reducing road harassments faced by their members. Because GAPTO recently faced leadership problems, the General Assembly provided an opportunity for the association to review and adopt a revised constitution and elect new officers. The assembly was attended by 58 delegates made up of 33 females and 25 males from 16 different commodity associations. Elections were held and plans for financial sustainability were prepared. The new officers were: Getrude Adu Yebo (Chairperson), Baffour Sarkodie (Vice Chairman), Dorothy Quaye (National Secretary), Lucy Osei, (Treasurer), Amadu Yussif (National Organizer), Mary Owusu (Assistant Organizer) and Hajia Kubura (Assistant Treasurer).
- A series of follow-up training sessions in ICT were held for previously-trained producers and traders from DMDA, the Yankaba Market Association, Lagos Mile 12 Market Association, RIFAN, FEPSAN and NAIDA in Nigeria. The trainings took place between October 6 and 28, 2005 and further enhanced participants' skills in the use of computers, various networking services and processes of using internet/email services.

### ***PIR 3: Improved West African Trade Environment***

- MISTOWA co-sponsored the 4<sup>th</sup> edition of the Annual Shea Butter Forum held at the Ran Hotel, Bobo Dioulasso, Burkina Faso with Table Filière Karité (TFK) and the Projet d'Appui à la Filière Bio-Alimentaire (PAF). Over a hundred stakeholders of the sheanut/butter supply chain (including collectors of shea nuts, national and international traders, agro-processors and technical and financial partners) participated in the 3-day event. The forum consisted of technical presentations by experts, local and international shea nut and shea butter buyers, projects such as PAF, MISTOWA and WATH and other NGOs in Burkina Faso. Products from raw materials to finished products were exhibited and sales were made. On the trade floor, 26,785 tons of shea nuts were demanded as against a supply of 4,575. On the contrary, 1,700 tons of butter was demanded as against 4,390 tons offered for sale. MISTOWA sponsored the participation of 16 sheanut collectors and processors at the lowest end of the chain from Benin, Burkina Faso, Ghana, Mali, Nigeria and Senegal to the forum and later on held a meeting with them to draw an action plan for MISTOWA's intervention in their respective countries.
- MISTOWA collaborated with WATH to plan activities aimed at reducing road transport harassments. While WATH is working with WAEMU in collaboration with truck drivers to track illegal payments and the overall costs of transportation along selected trade corridors, MISTOWA is working with the trade associations to lobby for improvements in road transport governance. During the quarter, MISTOWA planned a series of lobby trainings in six countries that will culminate in a regional workshop to create awareness and to identify lobbying strategies for the elimination of road transport harassments.

### ***Project Management***

- M & E: Chris Amedo and Kofi Debrah continue to work with country coordinators who are in contact with the trade associations selected for reporting imports and exports of selected commodities.
- Staffing: Raymond Grant, Business and Trade Advisor left in mid-December. His replacement was advertised in January and interviews were held. Consultants were used for several activities.

- Visitors: Several visitors were received by the project. These include Steve Travella, USAID consultant and Emmanuel Mensah-Ackman who came to MISTOWA to follow up on the TriNet training in which MISTOWA staff participated; Lyle Ashton Harris from New York University and New York Times Magazine photographer also worked with GAPTO members in the Agboghloshie market in Accra. Pictures from the market were featured in the January 2006 edition of the New York Times Magazine. Robert Kagbo and Jeremy Strauss from WARP visited MISTOWA to review the 2006 work plan and made suggestions for modification.
- Newsletters & Reports: MISTOWA Newsletters were published and distributed widely.
- New Project countries: Ivory Coast, Guinea, Niger and Togo were added during the quarter. In Ivory Coast, MISTOWA trained members of ANOPACI (producers' organization) in ICT. Charles Nouatin paid a 10-day working visit to Guinea to identify potential collaborators and point person for MISTOWA in Guinea. In Niger, a point person or representative was proposed. In Togo, MISTOWA was officially launched when the U.S. Mission, Chargé d'Affaires in Togo spoke at the opening ceremony.

## 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
Annual value of trade of selected products increased	5	2005	305,221,152	+	358,807,734	31,323,540			
Number of countries having compatible MIS	2	2004	0	+	15	10			
Change in the number of users of MIS	3	2005	103,303	+	206,606	29,622			
Change in the number of hits on partner websites	3	2005	117,085	+	128,794	30,490			
Number of individuals trained	4	2004	46	+	2,010	693			
Analyses produced for regional organizations	1	2005	0	+	1	0			

## Annex 2: 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						
		3						
		4						
2	Burkina Faso	1	3	0	4	5	29,820	
		2						
		3						
		4						
8	Gambia	1	0	0	0	0	0	
		2						
		3						
		4						
9	Ghana	1	8	46	87	49	88,410	
		2						
		3						
		4						
10	Guinea	1	2	0	2	1	4,000	
		2						
		3						
		4						
12	Ivory Coast	1	18	6	1	2	15,000	
		2						
		3						
		4						
13	Liberia	1	0	0	0	0	0	
		2						
		3						
		4						
14	Mali	1	24	7	5	2	25,800	
		2						
		3						
		4						
16	Niger	1	1	0	4	3	4,000	
		2						
		3						
		4						
17	Nigeria	1	190	89	7	2	96,180	
		2						
		3						
		4						
19	Senegal	1	66	55	24	62	37,980	
		2						
		3						
		4						
20	Sierra Leone	1	0	0	0	0	0	

FY 2006	Country	Qtr	Training (Men, Women)		Event Participation (Men, Women)		Fund Expenditure	Other
			Men	Women	Men	Women		
		2						
		3						
		4						
21	Togo	1	3	0	46	9	11,100	
		2						
		3						
		4						
	Total		<b>354</b>	<b>235</b>	<b>243</b>	<b>147</b>	<b>384,410</b>	



## SUCCESS STORY

# High Tech Traditional: New York Times Captures MISTOWA Project efforts



*Producers and traders in Agobgbloshie market gather around MISTOWA, ICT Trainer, Joel Dossoumon, demonstrating how to use a laptop to learn how to access market prices.*

In the January 1, 2006 *New York Times Magazine*, the article entitled “The Case for Contamination” by Kwame Anthony Appiah discusses the mixing of traditional and modern cultural structures. It is therefore no surprise that renowned photographer Lyle Ashton Harris of the *New York Times* wanted to capture MISTOWA's efforts to bring high tech equipment to the traditional Agbogbloshie market place. The photographs depicted in the article are a testament to the concept that traders and producers are ready for the use of technology to gather regional market information and have access to the worldwide web.

Many of the photographs depict members of the local association, GAPTO (Ghana Agricultural Products and Trader Organizations) using their mobile phones in the market place.

The *New York Times Magazine* pictures confirm MISTOWA's belief that given the opportunity producers and traders will take advantage of new technology to improve their lives.



## SUCCESS STORY

# Traders make millions supplying sheep for the *Eid-al-Kabir* Festival in Cote d'Ivoire



Photo: [paistdell.org/afspeaknew/goats.jpg](http://paistdell.org/afspeaknew/goats.jpg)

Trader in West African market place watches over his sheep.

On January 10, 2006, *Eid-al-Kabir* or *Tabaski*, the most important Muslim holiday of the year, was celebrated with an abundance of sheep and other livestock for consumers in Cote d'Ivoire. Traders at Abidjan's Terminal Market sold over \$17 million of sheep and at least \$500 thousand worth of cattle. This accomplishment was in sharp contrast to last year's *Tabaski* celebration where there existed a scarcity of sheep in the Ivorian market.

Since 2000, there has been difficulty getting sheep to Abidjan's Terminal Market. This situation has been attributed to the on-going conflict in Cote d'Ivoire, which prompted closures and indefinite interruptions of most traditional livestock trade routes from other countries into Abidjan. However, the success of this year's market supply for the festival was not by chance. It was the result of careful coordination and strategizing by trader and producer organizations.

On November 14-20, 2005, The President of CONFENAB-VI (National Federation of Cattle Traders Association in West Africa) convened a preparatory meeting for the upcoming *Tabaski* holiday. Among the stakeholders were Ibrahima Cisse, the Cote d'Ivoire National Vice President of ROESAO (Network of Economic Operators in the Food Industry), as well as Ibrahim Toure of Mali and Sami Traore of Burkina Faso, both MISTOWA staff members. Based on the previous year's experience, the leadership surmised that without any outside intervention, the supply of livestock would, again, not be able to satisfy the demand of consumers in Cote d'Ivoire.

The participants then assessed the number of sheep and other livestock that could be supplied in time for the festival. Their goals were to strategize on how they would address the various impediments they were facing and, also, to establish mechanisms that would facilitate the movement of sheep and other livestock between borders. Transportation issues were tackled. In order to protect traders during their return home, -convoys were organized, and other rail and road travel concerns were addressed. To implement these plans, follow-up meetings were arranged with the appropriate stakeholders.

In an interview of Cisse Ibrahima by the Ivorian newspaper, 'Le Front,' Mr. Ibrahima recognized that both the traders and the consumers benefited from this planning. In compliance with the traditional celebration of *Tabaski*, he stated that, "lower prices meant that the average Ivorian could offer a sheep."



## SUCCESS STORY

# ICT training of 600 West Africans provides computer literacy and more

**Equipped with computer training, agricultural producers and traders increasingly use electronic media to manage their associations and to access trading opportunities**

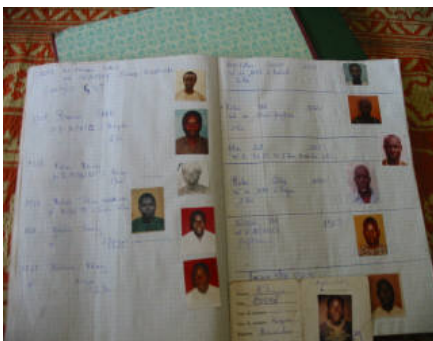


Photo: Kofi Debrah, COP MISTOWA

The Federation of Market Producers of Niayes (FPMN) of Senegal lead the way, moving from a handwritten ledger note-book system to an electronic data base record-keeping system, accurately tracking their members and monitoring trade activity.

When the MISTOWA (Market Information Systems and Trader Organizations in West Africa) project first provided ICT training to agricultural producers and traders in Nigeria, the participants were worried they would never grasp how to use the new technology. However, they soon realized that acquiring basic computer skills and learning to use Excel was easier than they imagined. In addition, accessing the worldwide web would fundamentally change their lives—for the better. Habibu Rabiou Yalwa, a proud trainee in Nigeria, now boasts of being able to send e-mail messages to friends, family and business associates alike.

Participants like Mr. Yalwa are now confident that they can use e-mail and the internet to identify suppliers, compare prices and assess market conditions across the region. This has expanded new opportunities to those who were previously limited to national or traditional information networks. By logging on to [www.wa-agritrade.net](http://www.wa-agritrade.net), Mr. Yalwa, a cereal trader, can now access pricing information in cities and towns all over West Africa, even if he is not privy to the traditional information networks.

While ICT training may have opened up a whole new world for its participants, building the capacity of agricultural producer and trader associations to access the West African market is also recognized as essential to increasing trade and providing food security in the region. Since its official launching in February 2005, the USAID-funded MISTOWA project has provided ICT training to nearly six-hundred (600) producers and traders.

Many associations are using their newfound skills to better manage their organizations. After a recent ICT training program by MISTOWA, the Federation of Market Producers of Niayes (FPMN) of Senegal, switched from a manual notebook ledger system to an electronic-based record-keeping system. With the aid of an Excel spreadsheet, the association members now realize that they can more accurately manage their member database and even track production and sales figures. FPMN staff welcome the changes because they no longer need to spend hours manually searching for information through tomes of ledger notebooks.



## SUCCESS STORY

### Attendance at Regional Trade Fairs Makes 'Impossible' Deals Possible

**The International Agricultural Trade Fair (FIARA) held in Dakar, Senegal in March 2005 provided the opportunity for traders, supported by MISTOWA, to access a larger and potentially more**



Assane Sambo and fellow traders walk their livestock on the exhibition ground at the 6<sup>th</sup> Annual International Agricultural Trade Fair (FIARA) held in Dakar, Senegal in March 2005.

Photo: Kofi Debrah, COP MISTOWA

Assane Sambo, a retired animal breeder in Niger and member of the Niger Traders Association, had prime livestock to sell but no buyers on the horizon. He wondered whether he should immediately sell the specially-bred livestock below cost, or wait for a market price increase in Niger.

USAID-funded MISTOWA (Market Information Systems and Traders Organizations in West Africa) realized that Mr. Sambo's dilemma was not unique. To address this situation, MISTOWA subsidized travel and attendance fees for more than 30 producers and traders for the 6<sup>th</sup> Annual International Agricultural Trade Fair (FIARA) to Dakar. The fair was organized by the National Council for Rural Consultation and Cooperation (CNCR), in collaboration with West Africa Network of Farmers' Organizations (ROPPA).

Taking advantage of the opportunity provided by MISTOWA, Mr. Sambo exhibited his finest 10 bulls and 30 sheep. After brief negotiations, he sold his livestock for about \$4,000. No small amount, when one considers that through this transaction he made the equivalent of an average annual salary for a senior civil servant in West Africa. Mr. Sambo observed that, "not only was I able to sell all the animals I brought, but I was able to take new orders for delivery at the next fair in 2006."

Trade fairs are not the only way for agricultural producers and traders to transact business outside of their communities. Other 'face-to-face' events such as *commodity fora* and *outlook conferences* are also effective. MISTOWA organizes *commodity foras* so that producers and traders may focus on all the aspects of a particular commodity chain. The annual *outlook conferences* bring together stakeholders to evaluate and forecast food security issues.

## Annex 4: Trip Reports

### **Trip 1: Attendance of Regional Grain Trade Summit and Study tour of public and private sector MIS providers in Kenya. By Patrice Annequin and Chris Amedo, October 8-15, 2005)**

#### **Purpose**

- To attend the first regional grain trade summit
- To learn about best practices in the collection and dissemination of market information from RATES, KACE and Ministry of Agriculture in Kenya

#### **Summary of Activities**

Patrice Annequin and Chris Amedo led a team of 7 delegates to Nairobi, Kenya. The team was made up of 2 officers from the Ministry of Food and Agriculture E-commerce centers (Ghana), 2 officers from RESIMAO affiliates in Niger and Burkina Faso, 3 officers from NAMIS and IITA (Nigeria) to Nairobi, Kenya. In order to observe trading activities, the team visited the horticultural, fruits and the grains markets. They also met with partners and visited the MIS facilities, as well as attending the Regional Grains Trade Summit.

#### Visits to MIS institutions and facilities

The team visited the Regional Trade Expansion Support Program (RATES), the Kenyan Ministry of Agriculture and the Kenya Agricultural Commodity Exchange (KACE). At RATES, they had discussions with the Market Information Analyst, Bridget Okumu, the Commodity Specialist, Stephen Njukia, the Regional Commodity Trade Manager, Pamela Chesire and the Chief of Party, Stephen Walls. We learned about the project's objectives, its coverage of the COMESA countries, news, data collection and dissemination, offers and bids and other functionalities. We in turn gave an overview of the MISTOWA project and discussed areas of common interest.

We then visited the Ministry of Agriculture where we met Mr. Kenneth Ayuko, the Director of Agribusiness and two other senior officers. They provided details on the ministry's data collection and dissemination system. Mr Ayuko explained that market price data is collected from 13 pilot markets situated throughout Kenya and transmitted to their headquarters for analysis and dissemination. He informed us that the ministry attempts to publish price information in a national daily newspaper but cannot always do so because of inconsistencies in data collection.

The team also visited the head office of Kenya Agricultural Commodity Exchange (KACE) located at Mpaka Road, Westlands Brick Court Building. The Executive Director, Adrian Mukhebi and his staff warmly received us. They explained their data collection and dissemination process and described how SMS is used to help traders in selling and buying of agricultural commodities in Kenya, as well as other countries in COMESA region. Mr. Amoroso Gombe, the Trading Systems Developer also showed us an on-line demonstration of the various platforms used to transact business. We visited the Trading Floor of KACE at the Kenya Agricultural Trade Fair Center where food commodities are auctioned and where producers and traders meet to transact business.

A field visit was conducted to KACE's Market Information Point (MIP) in Machakos, 42km from Nairobi . Regina Musyoki, the Machakos MIP Manager, provided us an explanation of their market price data collection and dissemination procedures and discussed their other agricultural extension activities. We then visited the local market to familiarize ourselves with the types of commodities sold. The manager and her assistants informed us about how prices are collected from both traders and producers and later displayed on a bulletin board to assist buyers and sellers to review make informed decisions. Another black board is located in front of the MIP indicating the price of available food commodities.

## Attendance of the Regional Grain Trade Summit

The 1<sup>st</sup> Regional Grain Trade Summit took place in the auditorium of Intercontinental hotel. About 220 participants from Kenya, Uganda, Zimbabwe, Burundi, Sudan, Tanzania, Egypt, Ethiopia, Rwanda, Zambia, Malawi, South Africa, Ghana, Nigeria, Niger, Burkina Faso, Italy, USA, U.K., Netherlands and Switzerland participated in the 2-day summit. The summit was opened by Joyce Cacho, Deputy Vice Chancellor at the Institutional Planning & Development, United States International University (USIU). The opening address focused on “Moving Food Grain from Agriculture to Agribusiness”. She challenged participants to make the agri-supply chain the relevant unit of analysis for agriculture and commercial policy making, investment decision making and poverty alleviation strategies that will lead to the most significant impact on the local, national, and regional economy. She emphasized that the key to regional commodity markets include:

- Regulatory harmonization in grades and standards determined in the region
- Legal code that governs warehouse receiving systems (Uniform Commercial Code)
- Trustworthy enforcing regional institutions

She concluded by urging the countries within the COMESA region to adopt appropriate measures that will deliver a coordinated agribusiness system.

The opening session was followed by 26 presentations by various resource persons. The topics included: “The Strategic Grain Reserves and Marketing Boards in Liberalized markets, Experiences in Tanzania”, “The Future of the National Cereals and Produce Board (NCPB) and Regional Market Integration”, ‘Development of Farm to Market and Inter-country Transport and Storage Networks’ and ‘The Grain Trade-Triple Dilemma’. The second day was devoted to workshop discussions in the morning and plenary session in the afternoon. Five workshops were organized and participants attended workshops according to their area of specialization or interest.

Workshop 1 deliberated on the topic ‘Public, Private and Donor Sector Investment/Intervention Options’. This meeting was facilitated by Jason Agar and was assisted by four other resource persons. Major discussion took place regarding where the public, private and donor sectors should invest and intervene in agricultural market systems so that positive change at the national, regional and international levels may occur.

Workshop 2 was facilitated by Nick Maunder and assisted by four resource persons. The topic discussed the ‘Role of Food Aid and National Grain Reserves and Their Impact on Trade’. Participants in this group were tasked to discuss the current relationship between food aid/food security operations and commercial grain trade with the aim of identifying opportunities and practices which could increase the effectiveness of both.

Workshop 3 discussed ‘Competitiveness-Farm to Market Systems’. This workshop was facilitated by James Nyoro and was assisted by three resource persons. The group was tasked to examine the issues of competitiveness and to identify national and regional-level initiatives that may improve market systems and raise the level of competitiveness.

Workshop 4 deliberated on the topic ‘Trade Finance: Collateral Management, Commodity Exchange and Warehouse Receipts’ and was facilitated by John McGrath and assisted by four resource persons. They deliberated on how the region can move forward in implementing financing and trade systems for national, regional and international markets.

Workshop 5 handled the topic ‘Enacting Effective Trade Policy for Improved Regional Trade’. This group discussion was facilitated by Shemmy Simuyemba and assisted by four resource persons. The workshop deliberated on the effectiveness of the process that regional trade bodies- COMESA and Eastern African Countries (EAC) are following, to lead the region towards harmonization and rationalization of trade policies; and the role that national governments and the private sector should play in this process.

The second session of the day was the plenary where each group presented results of the deliberations at the five workshops. This was followed up with the summit wrap up. The chairman re-echoed the need to keep the momentum going and focus on the do-able while forging a plan for the more challenging issues of

regionalization of grain trade in COMESA. He said it was necessary to develop a work plan that could focus on time frame between summits. He urged participants to facilitate a multi-party approach to addressing key issues over the long term and asked stakeholders to report on progress of implementation at the next summit.

It was also decided that the concept of a regional grain council be explored and once the council is established it will continue policy harmonization work that will result in un-restricted inter-regional grain trade through COMESA, EAC and SADC member states. He also encouraged COMESA countries to adopt the concept of public, private partnerships but to continue to dialogue with donors for investments.

### **Key persons met**

Included J. Mngodo of Tanzania, Ron Kopicki, Supply Chain Advisor from the World Bank, Tirop Kosgey, G.M. Maeti of COMESA secretariat in Lusaka, Zambia and Kenneth Ayuko of Agribusiness Market Development and Agricultural Information, Ministry of Agriculture, Kenya.

### **Implications for MISTOWA**

The trip provided the opportunity to learn best practices especially in the private sector provision of market information. The Market Information Point concept is relevant to MISTOWA where the producer and trader associations, existing market information centers, rural cyber cafés, SIGOA-TOPS information centers, AGOA resource centers and others can play Market Information point roles. Their information officers will be trained and given "hosting rights" by MISTOWA to load information on prices, offers and bids, contacts, transport information etc by internet, or SMS to the trade portal. In return the information officers will synthesize information and disseminate to their members.

### **Trip: 2 Attendance of the Market Access for Africa's Agricultural Products (MAAP) conference in South Africa by Kofi Debrah, Oct 22- 2 Nov 05**

#### **Purpose of the trip:**

- Participate in and present a paper at the Market Access for Africa's Agricultural Products (MAAP) Conference in Stellenbosch, South Africa
- Follow-up visits to the Regional Agricultural Trade Expansion Support Program (RATES), the Kenya Agricultural Commodity Exchange Ltd (KACE), and courtesy visit to the Rockefeller Foundation in Nairobi, Kenya

#### **Major Conclusions**

- Africa's exports are in fierce competition with developing countries in Asia and Latin America, therefore a market-oriented approach whereby the changing consumer requirements are taken into consideration is an important pathway to ensure access on a profitable basis.
- Clustering of several producers to increase supply capacity and to pool resources to invest in the promotion of the unique products in the EU market is another way of ensuring access on a profitable basis.
- RATES's success is attributable to its consultative approach, limited but clear objectives with specific areas of action and the involvement of the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA) and its stakeholders in the implementation process.
- KACE's strategy of using Market Information Centers (MICS) and points (MIPs) in the rural areas to generate and disseminate market price as well as agricultural extension information is providing the missing link between rural producers and urban consumers.
- Making beneficiaries pay for services they obtain from the information points and centers will contribute to the sustainability of the centers.
- The Rockefeller Foundation (co-sponsors of the forthcoming Fertilizer Summit in Abuja) is pleased with IFDC's commitment and preparation towards the summit.

## **Major persons contacted**

- Contacted the majority of the 120 MAAP participants from Europe, East and Southern Africa.
- Ms Thoko Didiza, Minister of Agriculture, South Africa, Dr. Isle Trautmann, Chairperson, South Africa Agri Academy and Mr. Ton Lansink, Chief Executive Officer, CBI, The Netherlands.
- Stephen Walls, Chief of Party, Thomas Carr, Technical Director & Ag Marketing Information Specialist, and Stephen Njuka, Commodity Specialist, The RATES project, Nairobi
- Andrian Mukhebi, Executive Director and staff of the KACE HQ and Regina Musyoki, Manager, Machakos Market Information Center.
- Dr. Akin Adesina, Rockefeller Foundation

## **Description of activities**

### The MAAP Conference (Oct 24-27)

About 120 delegates attended the conference. The objective was to bring together experts from all over the world to discuss opportunities and challenges in exporting agricultural products into the European Union market. Several important themes and sub-themes covering the entire supply chain were treated by experts with the latest information and experiences. Panel discussions followed. Africa's competitive position on certain commodities in the EU market was reviewed and the strengths and weaknesses, as well as the way forward were addressed. Major conclusions include:

- Africa's exports are in fierce competition with developing countries in Asia and Latin America, therefore a market-oriented approach whereby the changing consumer requirements are taken into consideration is an important pathway to ensure access on a profitable basis.
- Clustering of several producers to increase supply capacity and to pool resources to invest in the promotion of the unique products in the EU market is another way of ensuring access on a profitable basis.

The conference focused mainly on cut flower and horticultural exports from the COMESA to the EU and less attention was paid to intra-regional trade in food crops and other commodities as in the case of MISTOWA. My presentation was appreciated by several participants mainly because of its special focus on intra-regional trade and the complementary empowerment of producer and trader organizations to use market information and face-to-face events to increase trade.

### Follow up visits to RATES and KACE (30 Oct – 1 Nov)

The MISTOWA DCOP, Patrice Annequin had earlier, in October 2005, led a delegation of 10 partners from the national Market Information Services in Ghana, Nigeria, Niger and Burkina Faso to participate in a regional Grain trade Summit in Nairobi and used the opportunity to learn from the experiences of the MIS programs and initiatives in Kenya. They visited and had discussions with the RATES staff as well as the KACE in Nairobi and Machakos. My follow up visit was to have further discussions on how we could apply some of the experiences in MISTOWA.

### RATES visit (Oct 31)

Tom Carr and Stephen Njuku received and briefed me on the activities of RATES, the challenges and prospects and I in turn briefed them on MISTOWA. Our challenges are similar: getting the sub-regional organizations (COMESA in their case) and (ECOWAS in our case) to fully facilitate the movement of goods and services across the borders. However, RATES has made good attributable to its consultative approach, limited but clear objectives with specific areas of action and the involvement of the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA) and its stakeholders in the implementation process. We paid a courtesy visit to Stephen Walls, RATES COP and he expressed interest in the ICT and equipment support we are giving our partners in the MISTOWA project. He endorsed the idea of MISTOWA following through with these partners to monitor the impact of the support on their trade flows. I mentioned that through the ROESAO and its affiliates the MISTOWA project will implement an advocacy activity of drawing attention to

road transport constraints along selected trading corridors in the 2006 fiscal year. We discussed the importance of grades and standards for regional trade and I reminded him that he had planned to initiate action on developing the standards by involving all stakeholders.

#### KACE visit (Oct 31 and Nov 1)

I was received by Dr. Andrian Mukhebi, Executive Director of KACE who gave me a guided tour of the facilities and arranged for his staff to accompany me to the Market Information Point (MIP) in Machakos. (Detailed information about the center and activities in Machakos can be found in the trip report prepared by Patrice Annequin on their visit). At Machakos, I had in-depth discussions with Regina Musyoki, Manager. Our discussions centered on the ways revenue is generated by the center to cover operational costs and staff salary. The strategies include commissions of traders and producers on posting their offers and bids and on concluded deals. The source of this revenue is small but others including photocopying, scanning, sale of market information to private companies etc., is financially maintaining the center. The center's resources do not yet permit them to provide computer and ICT training services for fees.

#### Rockefeller visit (Nov 1)

I paid a courtesy visit to the Rockefeller Foundation and had discussions with Dr. Akin Adesina. I updated Dr. Adesina on the MISTOWA activities and on the preparations of the forthcoming Fertilizer Summit. Dr. Adesina expressed his satisfaction with the summit preparations led by IFDC.

### **Trip 3: Participation in the USAID WARP-funded, INTSORMIL-implemented cereal marketing and processing workshop in Saly, Senegal. Kofi Debrah , 12-18 December 05**

#### **Purpose of the trip:**

- Participation in the USAID WARP-funded, INTSORMIL-implemented cereal marketing and processing workshop in Saly.
- Working visit to review MISTOWA activities in Senegal.

#### **Major Conclusions**

- The new USAID-funded projects in Senegal may be interested in MISTOWA activities in Senegal beginning with the January lobby training to advocate for improvements in road transport governance.
- The cream of West Africa's cereal processors and food scientists shared experiences to discuss issues concerning the supply of high quality cereals and new ideas were gained on how processors and producers may be linked to improve cereal trade and processed products within the context of MISTOWA.
- Franchising may be an interesting way for food processing companies to expand their business to the rural areas and to get regular raw material supplies.
- Paying quality premium to producers will guarantee the regular supply of quality raw materials.

#### **Major persons contacted**

- John Stamm, Kevin Sturr and Moustapha Gaye (USAID Senegal)
- John Yohe, Lloyd Rooney, John Sanders, Ouendeba Botorou, Tahirou Abdoulaye and the rest of the INTSORMIL team from the USA and Africa
- Directors of cereal processing companies notably Pierre Ndiaye (JABOOT/Senegal), Alhaji Ali Madugu (DALA FOODS/Nigeria), Mme Diallo Oumour Sissoko (MAM Cocktail/Mali) and Mme Bineta Coulibaly (VIVRIERE/Senegal)
- Magatte Gueye, IFDC/MISTOWA Senegal
- Abdelghani Souirji, Director ONG EWA, Senegal

#### **Description of activities**

### USAID Visit (Dec 12)

I visited John Stamm at the USAID mission in the company of Robert Kagbo (USAID/WARP). We brought each other up to speed on our respective projects or programs (John on Private Sector USAID/Senegal, Robert on IEHA USAID/West Africa and Kofi on MISTOWA). John is current on MISTOWA through the monthly Newsletter. He described the two new projects that have just been awarded to IRG (International Resource Group) which may complement MISTOWA activities in Senegal. They are the "WOLANAF" project aimed at the promotion of natural resources including shea butter and bisap and the "SAGIC" project. The components of the latter include public-private sector partnership, policy reform to reduce corruption and trade export development. John is interested in the lobby training MISTOWA hopes to conduct for leaders of producers and trade organizations in Senegal and Guinea. The first will be conducted in Senegal in mid-January. The training will equip the participants to prepare position papers and a plan of action to fight corruption along in-country and regional border trade routes. I promised to have Sadibou Gueye and the team in Senegal send him details of the training in time for him to plan to attend or to send a representative. We paid a courtesy visit to Kevin Sturr and Moustapha Gaye in the Food for Peace Program.

### Saly Workshop (13-16 Dec)

The Marketing and Processing project is funded within the IEHA program and is of interest to MISTOWA by way of intra-regional trade in cereals as raw materials and as processed food. The workshop was attended by 31 participants from Burkina Faso, Ghana, Mali, Nigeria, Senegal, South Africa and the USA, and included food processors, food scientists and directors of projects. Topics discussed included the development of the supply chain (emphasizing that the strength of the chain is determined by the weakest link), issues of quality and hygiene, packaging and labeling and franchising. The experience of an NGO called EWA working in the Thiare region where a cooperative of about 12,000 farmers have a contract to supply raw materials to a company called JABOOT in Dakar appears to be a successful model to follow.

### Working visit (Dec 16)

I had a meeting with Magatte Gueye (MISTOWA/Senegal) in the absence of Sadibou Gueye on mission to Mali. We discussed preparations towards the lobby workshop involving Senegal and Guinea. Because of the USAID and EWA interest in the training, I proposed that we cut down the number of participants from Guinea from 10 to 6 and to increase the number of participants from Senegal from 10 to 14 to accommodate representatives from USAID and EWA. We discussed other MISTOWA-related technical and administrative issues.

### **Trip 4: From: Working visit to Burkina Faso to have discussions with CILSS, Patrice Annequin 20-22 December 2005.**

#### **Purpose of the trip:**

- Meet with CILSS to review conclusions and accounting issues after the 2 regional crop outlook conferences co-organized in 2005; prepare the 2006 sessions
- Meet with MISTOWA staff and local partners, including ROPPA and Afrique Verte

#### **Major Conclusions**

- After a successful collaboration in 2005, CILSS and MISTOWA are ready to organize the 2 coming editions of the Regional crop outlook conference in Ouaga (03/06) and Abuja (09/06)
- Afrique Verte can be a very valuable partner for implementing national activities in Burkina Faso.
- Relationship with ROPPA should be strengthened and facilitated, through better communication and access to the internet

#### **Major persons contacted**

- Moussa Cissé, CILSS – Programme Régional d’Accès aux Marchés
- Philippe Ki, Placide Coulibaly, Afrique Verte
- Mohamadou Magha, Ouédraogo Ousseini, ROPPA

## **Description of activities**

### Meeting at CILSS (Dec 21)

Sami Traore, Burkina Faso Country Coordinator, and I met Moussa Cisse, who is the primary MISTOWA contact person, during the crop outlook conferences. CILSS and MISTOWA co-organized and co-financed 2 conferences in 2005 (Bamako in March and Accra, in September) for an estimated amount of US\$ 358,687. We shared our expense reports, and made minor comments for consideration by CILSS and MISTOWA accounting managers. We noted that the collaboration between the 2 institutions is very good, with a well-balanced and designed budget and distribution of tasks.

Based on lessons learnt in 2005, and recommendations made at the end of the Accra Conference, we drafted a program and a budget for the coming conference, planned to be held in Ouagadougou on 20 to 24 March 2006. Key points are (i) a limited budget (ii) a 5-day program similar to the one in Accra (iii) an improved way of organizing the “opportunity day” in collaboration with Afrique Verte (iv) fewer but more prepared and involved participants. Details of the meeting are available on request (7 pages) and on the MISTOWA intranet.

### Meeting at Afrique Verte Burkina Faso (Dec 21)

Following recent contacts with this NGO in Bamako, Bobo Dioulasso and Amsterdam, Marie Laurentine Ilboudo, Sami Traore and I met Christine Kabore (présidente du Conseil d’Administration of the Burkinabe branch), Philippe Ki (coordinator for Burkina) and Placide Compaoré (training coordinator). As previously stated, Afrique Verte shares common objectives with MISTOWA including market access for PO and TOs, assistance for marketing, and organizational capacity building. In Burkina, 6 regional (district level) information centers are in place, collecting and disseminating market and marketing information (price, availability, stocks, and major events), organizing trainings, assisting producers for marketing their produce through trade fairs and tailored advice.

Marie Laurentine and Sami Traore will discuss and propose how Afrique Verte and MISTOWA can hold joint activities in Burkina in 2006. Among the possibilities are: the use of their training modules, well compiled materials and expertise for trainings of PO and TO; collaboration with the district level coordinators for MIS activities; organization of regional and national trade fairs and fora. They agreed to manage the coming “trade opportunity day” during the next Crop Outlook Conference. Mme Kabore promised to send us within the next 2 weeks some proposals and a more detailed presentation of their capabilities and prospects.

We visited the “bourse des cereales” co-organized in Ouaga (Dec 21- 22) by Afrique Verte, and the Comités Interprofessionnels des Céréales du Burkina (CICB) et du Riz du Burkina (CIRB).

More on [www.afriqueverte.org](http://www.afriqueverte.org)

### Meeting at ROPPA (Dec 20)

I had a useful meeting with M. Magha and O. Ouedraogo, Charles and Sami, although with no specific agenda. Despite Charles’ presence in ROPPA’s premises, communication remains weak between MISTOWA and ROPPA. In order not to undermine ROPPA’s authority, MISTOWA should be cautious when dealing directly with the chapters (e.g. ANOPACI, AOPP or FUPRO) to avoid widening the gaps between ROPPA national chapters. However, major regional and “bilateral” activities planned for 2006 are welcomed and fully supported, especially the FIARA event (March 06), the BBO lobbying training and activities for the rice and livestock “filières”. ROPPA promised to send its 2006 work plan and the 2005 annual report up their release. The project “Carte d’Identité Rurale” funded by USAID, and implemented by Agrhyment for ROPPA should be

publicized in order to optimize all partners' efforts to improve ROPPA's capabilities in terms of information systems (production, market, members, lobbying, policies, etc).

I recommend that the project provides immediate assistance to ROPPA in upgrading its internet connectivity and its website, which are clearly hampering communication between the apex and the national platforms, as well as their partners.