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“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
GAABIC	Ghana Agricultural Associations Business Information Center
GAPTO	Ghana Agricultural Products and Traders Organization
GHATAG	Ghana Haulage and Transport Owners Association
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
WACSOFF	West African Civil Society Forum
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)


First Quarterly Report (October – December 2006)

Executive Summary

USAID/WA 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. Agriterra from the Netherlands contributed an additional \$1.4m to support the producers' component of the 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).

In a letter dated July 28, 2006, IFDC-MISTOWA was notified of USAID/WA's decision to adjust funding levels of its programs to respond to new priorities and opportunities across Africa. The original end-of-project date was advanced from September 30, 2008 to September 30, 2007.

Major events of the quarter:

-  **MISTOWA spotlighted at International Trade Fairs in Togo and Mali:** MISTOWA mounted stands at the International Agricultural Exhibition (SIAGRI) in Mali, and the International Agriculture Trade Fair (FACI) in Togo and explained how producers and traders could obtain real time market information via radio, SMS and website using the TradeNet platform developed by a private company and piloted with producers and traders working with MISTOWA. Live demonstrations were made for the President of Mali, Genera Amadou Toumani Touré and his Prime Minister, Ousmane Issoufi Maiga when they visited the MISTOWA stand in Mali. Similar demonstrations were made for Mr. J.A. Diffily, Deputy Chief of Mission, United States Embassy in Togo when he visited the stand
-  **The 5th Annual Shea Exchange "Bourse de Karité" yielded positive results;** At the 5th edition of the annual "bourse de Karité" held in Bobo Dioulasso, Burkina Faso, 22,870 tons of shea nuts and 972 tons of shea butter were offered for sale against a demand of 18,100 and 5,300 tons of sheanut and shea butter respectively
-  **GAABIC Center officially opened to the public:** The Ghana Agricultural Associations Business Information Center (GAABIC), a common resource center for the Apex Farmers Organization of Ghana (APFOG), Ghana Agri- Input Dealers Association (GAIDA) and CropLife Ghana was officially opened on the 8th of December 2006. The center is a meeting place, a browsing and training center, a business center and where members can register their phones to receive SMS alerts including offers to sell and to buy agricultural inputs and products. The event attracted producers, traders, transporters, public institutions and non-governmental organizations.
-  **Agribusiness training workshops organised for managers and association members.** The first of the three 3-day agribusiness training workshop was conducted for ABIP managers in Benin, Burkina Faso, Cote D'ivoire, Ghana, Mali, Niger, Nigeria Senegal. and Togo. In all 336 association members including 110 ABIP managers participated. The participants were introduced to the principles of business management, proper customer relations, fundamentals of marketing and basic financial management. ABIP managers received extra training for promoting their ABIP and in particular how to provide paid services to members for financial sustainability.

- ✚ **International Training Workshop to Share the ABIP experience;** MISTOWA organized an International workshop for project leaders and MIS practitioners for English-speaking countries from Cameroon, Ghana, the Gambia, Nigeria and Sierra Leone. The three-day workshop included sessions for sharing experiences from other countries. Participants had hands-on training on the use of TradeNet and how to set up and run sustainable Agribusiness Information Points. The training led to a request from Cameroon to adapt TradeNet to the Root and Tuber Program. The Gambia and Sierra Leone agreed to upload price information from their countries and would set up ABIPs.
- ✚ **Delegation of MISTOWA-trained agricultural advocates presented issues of concern to ECOWAS.** MISTOWA sponsored a delegation of 22 producers and traders from Benin, Burkina Faso, Ghana, Mali, Nigeria, Togo and Senegal to the 5th annual forum of the West African Civil Society Forum in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso. A “Food, Agriculture and Environment Advocacy” thematic working group was formed and placed under the leadership of IFDC/MISTOWA. The working group members were selected from the MISTOWA delegation.

Successes from the interventions during the quarter include:

- **Increased intra-regional trade:** Intra-regional trade monitored for 15 trade associations was estimated at \$27.26 million for the first quarter of FY 2007. In addition, \$14.8m trade in cattle, cowpea, maize, millet, onion, rice, sesame and shea butter were reported by individual; traders or their associations in 21 transactions.
- **Participation in international exhibition in Togo yielded positive results:** The Togo affiliate of the regional traders association (ROESAO) made direct sales of various agricultural products amounting to 1,300,000 CFA during the 10-day trade fair organized in Kpalime, Togo. A cattle breeder group from Kloto district in Togo placed an order for 420 cows estimated at CFA 84 million. Other transactions included negotiations for a trade deal of CFA 94 million between a member of CT-ROESAO and a group that specializes in the production of perfumed rice. A Norwegian company reportedly requested a monthly supply of between 1000-2000 tons of shea butter and another 1000-1200 tons of palm oil.
- **More users registering on the trade portal website:** The use of the trade portal www.wa-agritrade.net is increasing, and new users are registering for the services. New registrations increased from 21 per month last quarter to 38 per month, an increase of 79%.
- **Greater customization of TradeNet to association needs:** MISTOWA assisted Ghana Haulage and Transport Owners Association (GHATAG) to create their TradeNet-linked “website” www.tradenet.biz/ghatag. This permits them to customize the TradeNet to fit their needs by directly and efficiently managing the contents and membership database, while making information on the TradeNet available to them. As a first step, members registered their contacts and cellular phones on the “contact” page of TradeNet to be contacted for hauling and transport opportunities.

Manager’s Report

Major activities accomplished in the first quarter of FY 07 are briefly highlighted in this report by PIR. The attached appendices include the performance indicator and country summary tables and trip reports.

PIR 1: Improved market information generation and dissemination

1. Agribusiness Information Point (ABIP) managers continue to receive training

- ✚ The first in a series of three 3-day agribusiness training workshops was conducted for ABIP managers in Togo, Cote D’ivoire, Ghana, Mali, Niger, Nigeria and Senegal. In all 110 managers

participated in the trainings in these countries. The participants were introduced to the principles of business management, proper customer relations, marketing and promotion of the ABIP center and in particular to provide paid services to members. Other topics treated included preparing operational budgets, cash flow and income & expenditure statements and providing quality customer service

- ✚ In Mali, APCAM (Producer organizations ABIP) is taking the lead role in coordinating a number of institutions, projects and organizations who have a direct or indirect stake in market information collection, processing or distribution in Mali. APCAM and MISTOWA entered into discussions with a cellular phone company (Ikatel/Orange) to prepare a business agreement that would have the company distribute market information using their mobile phones. When concluded, users would be able to post information and receive alerts by SMS at a very affordable cost.
- ✚ MISTOWA and ANOPACI (Cote d'Ivoire), and NAMIN (Nigeria) have continued discussions of partnership with MTN to distribute contents by SMS in Côte d'Ivoire and Nigeria, respectively.

2. TradeNet development and use statistics

- **New features added:** New features have been added to the regular ones like the offers to buy and sell, realtime market prices and free user websites. The new features include “maps” (www.tradenet.biz/maps) which allows browsers to create graphical price comparisons between countries and markets; “really simple syndication (rss data feeds)” www.tradenet.biz/rss, a feature that allows information from TradeNet to be fed directly for use by radio, newspapers and websites. Another important feature is the digital distribution system www.tradenet.biz/library that allows individuals or organizations to share documents, audio and video files associated with markets and commodities. For example www.tradenet.biz/anopaci/dossiers shares a video of a testimony of an Ivorian producer (“témoignage d’un utilisateur du SIM (Anopaci) radio”), of how information from Tradenet broadcast on radio has increased a particular woman’s revenue.
- **Total number of markets increased:** We have now entered almost 400 markets across the region and trained over 500 trainers. For full list of markets covered, see www.tradenet.biz/markets Market-specific reports for comparative prices, offers and news are automatically generated for a given market.
- **Trade portal (www.wa-agritrade.net) usage statistics:** Is summarized below. All the indicators showed increases except for the SMS price requests which dropped from an average of 7 messages per day in the previous quarter to 5 per day during the reporting period. There was no apparent reason to explain the slight drop in the price requests but users seem to be finding the use of SMS for alerts and offers to buy or sell more important. This statistics would be tracked in the next quarter. We noted increased number of new user registrations of 113 this quarter as compared with 63 in the previous quarter. A promotional campaign is being planned including an official launching to create more awareness and to train more users to use the cellular phones to request prices, post information or to receive alerts and offers.

Table 1: Selected Statistics on the Trade Portal Usage

	Months	October	November	December	Oct-Dec Total	Jul- Sep Total
Statistics tracked						
Pages viewed		14,146	10,438	9,197	33,781	33,777
New registrations		26	49	38	113	63
SMS requests		193	171	78	470	622
prices uploaded		7926	8,530	6,006	23,325	20,828
News stories uploaded		25	16	34	75	68

- **TradeNet to be launched in January:** BusyLab, MISTOWA and GAPTO plan to officially launch TradeNet in January. The first event to be organized mainly by BusyLab would target the press and potential partners while the second event to be organized by MISTOWA and GAPTO would

be a public launch targeting the general public. The purpose of the two events would be to create awareness and to get new user to sign up.

PIR 2: Improved trader and producer skills

1. Training of ABIP information officers and managers

- ✚ A series of 3-day agribusiness training workshop was conducted for ABIP managers in Benin, Burkina Faso, Cote D'ivoire, Ghana, Mali, Niger, Nigeria Senegal. and Togo. In all 336 association members including 110 managers participated. The participants were introduced to the principles of business management, proper customer relations, marketing. ABIP managers received extra training for promoting ABIP and in particular how to sell services to members to make the centers financially sustainable.
- ✚ The gender breakdown of those receiving training during the quarter was 233 males (69%), and 103 females (31%). Producer organizations represented 41 % of all trainees as compared with 30% being trader organizations.

PIR 3: Improved West African trade environment

1. Agricultural trade and cultural fairs

- MISTOWA supported the participation of the national chapter of ROESAO in Togo (CT-ROESAO) to exhibit and sell various agricultural commodities, artisanal and semi-industrial products at the International Trade Fair organized by World Business Enterprise in Kpalime-Togo.
- MISTOWA mounted stands at the International Agricultural Exhibition (SIAGRI) in Mali, and the International Agri-Culture Trade Fair (FACI) in Togo and explained how producers and traders could obtain real time market information via radio, SMS and website using the TradeNet platform developed by a private company and piloted with producers and traders working with MISTOWA. Live demonstrations were made for the President of Mali, Genera Amadou Toumani Touré and his Prime Minister, Ousmane Issoufi Maiga when they visited the MISTOWA stand. Similar demonstrations were made for Mr. J.A. Diffily, Deputy Chief of Mission, United States Embassy in Togo when he visited the stand
- MISTOWA co-sponsored and facilitated the participation of 13 actors in the shea value chain from Burkina Faso and Mali at the 5th Annual shea exchange “bourse de karité” in Bobo Dioulasou in December. At the fair, 22,870 tons of shea nuts and 972 tons of shea butter were offered for sale against a demand of 18,100 tons and 5,300 tons of shea nut and butter, respectively.

2. Reported trade

- Fifteen trade associations from Benin, Burkina Faso, Ghana, Mali, Nigeria and Senegal recorded intra-regional trade involving 22,204 tons of foodcrops and 51,691 heads of cattle, all valued at \$27,260,409.
- In addition, \$14.8m trade in cattle, cowpea, maize, millet, onion, rice, sesame and shea butter were reported by individual; traders or their associations in 21 transactions.

3. Advocacy work

- Agriterra supported an advocacy firm from the Netherlands earlier in the year to train producer and trader organizations leaders on how to advocate for improvements in the business environment. This culminated in the identification of advocacy issues related to agricultural inputs, road harassments and access to market information to be presented to the ECOWAS Heads of State for action. During the quarter, the West African Civil Society Forum (WACSOF) invited MISTOWA to participate in the 5th annual forum and present issues of concern at the ECOWAS Heads of State Summit in Ouagadougou.
- MISTOWA sponsored a delegation of 22 producers and traders from Benin, Burkina Faso, Ghana, Mali, Nigeria, Togo and Senegal to the forum. They were selected from the informal advocacy committees formed in the various countries after the advocacy training. At the meeting, a “Food,

Agriculture and Environment Advocacy” thematic working group was formed and placed under the leadership of IFDC/MISTOWA. The working group consists of 20 members from the 15 ECOWAS countries including those sponsored by MISTOWA. Ms Getrude Adu-Yebo, Chairperson of the Ghana Agricultural Producers’ and Traders Organization (GAPTO) was elected to serve on the WACSOE Executive Committee. Issues of road transport harassment and improved access to quality and affordable agricultural inputs were transmitted by the thematic group to the Council of Ministers for onward transmission to the ECOWA S Heads of State meeting in Ouagadougou on December 22, 2006.

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

1. Grant administration

- Partial or final payments for the purchase and installation of computers under the equipment grant were made to ROPPA, RESIMAO, RECAO and ROESAO and their national affiliates.
- Specifically, we disbursed \$82,000 to ROPPA and worked with MISTOWA country coordinators and ROPPA platforms to purchase computers and accessories in Benin, Burkina Faso, the Gambia, Ghana, Guinea Bissau, Guinea Conakry, Mali, Niger, Senegal, Sierra Leone and Togo.
- Individual producer and trader associations such as FEITLS and UNOCOIS in Senegal and UDOPER in Benin also received their equipment grants.
- The grants committee also awarded competitive grants for qualifying activities including the establishment and the management of the ABIPs. The recipients were DMDA, Lagos Mile 12 and LACASFA (Lagos State Catfish & Allied Farmers Association) in Nigeria, ASSIAHOC, CMC Banikoara, CORVO Malanville, GCPV B-A, URPAZ-C, UNIRIZ-C and RCOPROV, all in Benin and the AKOTCHE-TCHIKOSSAN Association in Togo.

2. Monitoring and Evaluation

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

- \$27.26 million of trade for the quarter reported by the associations being monitored
- \$14.8m trade in cattle, cowpea, maize, millet, onion, rice, sesame and shea butter reported by individual traders or their associations.
- www.wa-agritrade.net user statistics

3. Visitors

Visitors to the Ghana office during this quarter included:

- Martin Labbe, a Consultant at the International Trade Center. He visited the office to acquaint himself with the functions and objectives of the project.
- Bob Walker, a senior Manager with Market Development Pioneers International, Ghana also visited the office to acquaint himself of the MISTOWA project and to discuss seed market access.
- Ebenezer Affanie, Country Manager, FarmServe Africa Program, OIC (Ghana) and Gnana Ousmane Country Coordinator OIC (Nigeria) for discussions on how they can work with MISTOWA.

4. Newsletters

- No newsletter was published during the quarter as a result of staff changes
- Plans are underway to publish a special focus Newsletter in February to cover the official launch of TradeNet to the media and to the public.

5. Public Relations and Promotional Activities

- Promotional materials to officially launch TradeNet and GAPTO’s Agribusiness Information Point in January 2007. The promotional materials include “ how to” posters, brochures and tip sheets to help users seek prices, post offers to sell and to buy and to register their cellular phones to receive alerts. Other materials include t-shirts, caps and wrist bands each carrying the trademark, logos and website addresses for TradeNet and GAPTO.

6. Reports

Reports produced during this quarter include:

- October, November and December activity reports submitted by MISTOWA coordinators from Benin, Burkina Faso, Ghana, Mali, Nigeria, Senegal and Togo.
- Trip reports
- MISTOWA Brief- Focus on Burkina Faso
- Reports on MISTOWA's participation in the Togo and Mali International Trade Fairs
- Charles Nouatin prepared a report on his participated in the regional food sovereignty workshop in Niamey, Niger..

Annex 1: Performance Indicator Table

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	FY 2007 Actual
<i>a) Annual value of trade of selected products from 15 trade associations supported by MISTOWA increased (\$)</i>	5	2005	120,000,000	+	18,000,000	27,260,409				
<i>b) Annual value of trade of selected products reported as deals by project beneficiaries increased (\$)</i>	5	2005	185,221,152	+		14,801,482				
Total quarterly value (a + b) of selected products increased (\$)	5	2005	305,221,152	+		42,061,891				
Number of countries having compatible MIS	2	2004	0	+	10	10				
Number of users of MIS	3	2005	103,303	+	134,000	33,295				
Number of hits on partner websites	3	2005	117,085	+	2,488	63,141				
Number of individuals trained	4	2004	46	+	600	336				
Analyses produced for regional organizations	1	2005	0	+	1	0				

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	2			
<i>Number of ABIPs that cover 30% of their costs by Sept 2007</i>	1	2006	0	+	50	0			
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	260			

Annex 3: Country Summary Table

FY 2007	Country	Qtr	Training (Men, Women)		Event Participation (Men, Women)		Fund Expenditure	Other
			Men	Women	Men	Women		
1	Benin	1	16	1	18	10	40,500	
		2						
		3						
		4						
2	Burkina Faso	1	34	19	8	12	35,700	Includes \$5,500 contribution to TFK for the Bourse de Karité
		2						
		3						
		4						
8	Gambia	1	2	0	0	0	3,600	
9	Ghana	1	35	15			42,160	Includes \$35,500 for the International MIS training
10	Guinea	1	0	0	0	0	0	
12	Ivory Coast	1	19	1	0	0	2,500	
13	Liberia	1	0	0	0	0	0	
14	Mali	1	14	5	22	25	17,800	Includes \$7,500 contribution to APCAM for the SIAGRI trade fair
16	Niger	1	13	1	6	8	14,000	Includes \$10,000 Food sovereignty summit organized by ROPPA

FY 2007	Country	Qtr	Training (Men, Women)		Event Participation (Men, Women)		Fund Expenditure	Other
			Men	Women	Men	Women		
17	Nigeria	1	21	8	0	0	3,300	
19	Senegal	1	29	11	11	14	48,750	
20	Sierra Leone	1	1	0	0	0	1,870	
21	Togo	1	11	5	26	35	15,100	Includes \$8,000 contribution to ROESAO- and ROPPA-Togo for the FACI trade fair
	Total		175	60	91	104	225,280	

Annex 4: Case Studies

No case studies were written up this quarter

Annex 5: Trip Reports

Trip 1: Dr Kofi Debrah Trip Report Abuja-Nigeria, October 17-21, 2006

Purpose of the trip:

I was invited by ECOWAS to participate in the presentation of an IFPRI/IITA study “Exploring Regional Strategic Priorities in Agriculture for Achieving Growth and Poverty Reduction in West and Central Africa” and the launching of the “Regional Strategy Analysis and Knowledge Systems (ReSAKSS) to support the ECOWAP/CAADP agenda in West and Central Africa”

October 18: Day spent discussing project issues with the MISTOWA team in Abuja and the IFDC Country Representative in Nigeria. Worked on the MISTOWA quarterly report and “Case Study” stories featuring the trade associations moving towards sustainability and partnership with cellular phone providers. Blessing and Henry elaborated the first draft of the stories, now finalized and included in the MISTOWA Quarterly Report submitted to USAID/WA as “Case Studies”.

October 19: Workshop to present IFPRI/IITA study

The primary purpose of the IFPRI/IITA study is to explore alternative region-wide development strategy and research priorities for generating economic growth and poverty reduction. The study attempted to explore the appropriateness of the 6% agricultural growth rate that NEPAD hopes would meet the MDG 1 goal. It also attempted to delineate which agricultural sub-sectors will contribute most to the growth.

Various parts of the study were presented by Chris Legg (IITA), Xinshen Diao, Alejandro Nin-Pratt, Shenggen Fan and Regina Birner (IFPRI). The presentations were followed by discussions from the floor and a discussion of three panelists: Dr. Daniel Eklu (Director of Agriculture, ECOWAS), Mr. Pierre Ndjaye (Managing Director of Jabot representing the Private Sector), Dr. Paco Sereme (Director, CORAF, representing agricultural research) and Dr. Kofi Debrah, Chief of Party, MISTOWA.

The main conclusions and recommendations from the IITA/IFPRI study to meet the goals of economic growth and poverty alleviation are to:

- focus on the productivity of the staples and livestock sub-sectors for (i.e. coarse grains and livestock in the Sahel, rice and root crops for the coastal countries)
- expand intra-regional trade in staples and livestock, and diversifying exports preferably into new markets in Asia and Eastern Europe
- enhance linkages to agro-industries (processed foods, feed and intermediate products).
- exploit opportunities for greater regional cooperation and harmonization of policies and procedures

My intervention as panelist endorsed these recommendations based on the experience gained with MISTOWA in the last two years (see annexe).

October 20: Workshop to launch ReSAAKS

ReSAAKS is a CGIAR initiative with regional nodes in Eastern, Southern and West Africa. It is a knowledge support system for planning, review, dialogue and strategic analytical tool to support the NEPAD/CAADP. IITA is hosting the ReSAAKS in West Africa. In its set up the country level SAAKS will provide support for planning, implementation and progress review. The Regional level SAAKS will provide support for regional coordination and peer review while the continental level SAAKS will provide policy dialogue support. The key components of the ReSAAKS are:

- Strategic Analysis (for example, investments and policy analysis to support priority setting; monitoring and evaluation)
- Knowledge Systems management (for example data collection, analysis, websites, policy briefs and other publications)
- Reinforcement of Capacity for example, training national partners in GIS analysis, trend analysis and organization of professional producer organizations)

Two groups separately deliberated on how these components could serve ECOWAS in its investment program, common exterior tariff and other ECOWAS/CAAPD activities. Group findings were presented and discussed in a plenary session. The conclusions of the workshop are being summarized and will be circulated by Mr. Mbaye, Yade, Regional SAAKS Coordinator based at IITA.

Discussions with various stakeholders

I had separate but brief discussions with Yamar Mbodge, the ECOWAS staff officer in charge of the ECOWAP/CAADP and Dr. Daniel Eklu, Director of Agriculture. The discussions were about the roles they foresee for IFDC (MISTOWA project) in the implementation of the CAADP. They recognize the importance of the work done by MISTOWA and its experience and indicated their interest and that a mission is planned for consultations with potential partners.

With Mellisa Knight (USAID/WA), the discussions were on the potential role MISTOWA could play and why there seems to be apparent duplication of efforts with the ReSAAKS which is also partly financed by USAID. There is a possibility an independent consultant could be hired by USAID/WA to evaluate the existing initiatives and advice.

TRIP 2: Claudia LaLumia Trip Report Kano, Kaduna, Abuja, Nigeria, November 26-December 2, 2006

Purpose of the trip:

- Co-facilitate ABIP management training in Kaduna.
- Visit FEPSAN office and ABIP in Kaduna.
- Visit DMDA ABIP and a market to check on ABIP development, discuss Government of Nigeria's recent declarations that they intend to support development of Dawanau market and how.
- Visit Yankaba market and the new ABIP recently established there by Perishable products Association.
- Meet with Agricultural Economist, Abdulkadir Gudugi (CTO MARKETS project) and Nduka Okaro, Ag & Environment Specialist (CTO REFORMS) project at USAID in Abuja.

Itinerary

November 26	Accra-Lagos-Abuja-Kaduna (AM flight to Abuja then road to Kaduna)
November 27-29	Kaduna
November 30	Kaduna-Kano-Kaduna by road
December 1	Kaduna-Abuja by road
December 2	Abuja-Accra (11AM flight)

Major persons contacted

- 14 ABIP managers: Participants at the training.
- Mr. Ahmed Rabiu Kwa, Executive Secretary FEPSAN
- Alhadji Ahmed (Imam), Executive Secretary DMDA
- Abdulkadir Gudugi and Nduka Okaro, USAID Abuja

Major Conclusions

The ABIP training

- The ABIP training went very well with 14 ABIP managers (only one missed the last day as he was called back to Kano for something). Participants were very engaged and interactive throughout all sessions. We were able to cover all content planned. The next training will be scheduled in February and will pick up where we left off on session 4 (financial management) before continuing on to following sessions.
- The training was held at the CRC in Kaduna and Abdulfattah Yusuf did an excellent job of coordinating logistics of using the center facilities. Internet connectivity was available for all participants although the connection was sometimes very slow. Despite this constraint the participants remained very interested and patient throughout the sessions.
- Once again (as in other countries) I had the impression that the ABIP managers are not adequately well versed in the use of TradeNet. The ICT sessions focused on TradeNet use exclusively but the topics were quite elementary for a group that has already received a number of Tradenet and ICT trainings

(mainly focusing on uploading prices, using SMS to receive prices, researching prices on the site, configuring new users, etc.). The TradeGroups function was demonstrated and the DMDA website was shown.

- The group of trainers did an excellent job complementing each other, sharing tasks and the presentation of various sessions. Trainers included: Gabriel Afu, Gafar Ajao, Kuku Kolawole, Henry Ekpiken, Abdulfattah Yusuf and myself. Dr. Richard Okechukwo from, NAMIN also visited the training to present NAMIN's progress registering as a Ltd. and ideas pertaining to their future partnership with MTN.
- Not all of the ABIP managers on the final list of ABIPs were invited to the training, and a couple additional ABIP managers were invited (1 additional FEPSAN member organization and the Yankaba ABIP representative). The two add ons are individuals and associations that have received previous MISTOWA-organized training. Those on the final list of ABIPs but not invited were NAMIS and CRC representative offices that received ICT equipment under Daimina but which have not previously attended MISTOWA trainings. At any rate all participants know MISTOWA, the ABIP concept and have been trained several times on TradeNet and ICT use.

Additional Meetings and Conclusions

Meeting with Mr. Kwa, Exec. Sec. FEPSAN

This was a brief courtesy visit late in the afternoon after the training finished. Henry and I visited Mr. Kwa at his office to discuss how things are developing with respect to their ABIP. They have the equipment MISTOWA has provided and he explained that people do come in for information requests. Unfortunately neither he nor his secretary was available during the week to attend the ABIP training (they were involved in a MARKETS activity planning workshop). We briefly discussed the content of the ABIP training, said that Henry will send him the materials used, and stressed that he or his secretary (who also receives people at their ABIP) should be present for subsequent trainings. He agreed and was very thankful to MISTOWA for all support given to date.

Visit to DMDA and the Dawanau market

Henry and I traveled to Kano to meet with Gafar and the Secretary General of DMDA (Ahmed Imam). They explained how DMDA came about and the development of the market, their involvement with MISTOWA and significant progress they feel they have made since receiving MISTOWA's support. Ahmed also explained why it is so difficult to collect real information about trade deals made by their members, explaining that the traders are very secretive about this to preserve the profitability of their endeavors. We discussed the Government of Nigeria's recent visit to Dawanau market (visit made by 2 delegates from the Direction of the Federal Ministry of Commerce and Industry) and the President of Nigeria's subsequent declaration that the GON would invest in further development of Dawanau market. We learned from Ahmed that "development" may include building of building warehouses, paving roads, building a 5-star hotel to lodge visitors, drainage infrastructure, housing, etc. We asked Ahmed what DMDA thinks of this. He says they are very pleased and confident that anything the GON does, they will do after consultation and negotiation with DMDA (in consideration of the fact that DMDA owns the market). Ahmed said he expects the GON will come in either to buy land from DMDA on which to build, or to build infrastructure and rent out to DMDA for management. He stated that they are in the process of following up on the GON declarations but do not expect that much will happen before elections (beyond ensuring that the paperwork gets on the desks of the appropriate Ministers so that actual progress can be made after elections). We also discussed the fact that the Abuja Commodity Stock Exchange called Ahmed into Abuja for a meeting (back in August or September) and they discussed the possibility of DMDA regularly providing the ACSE with market information. We discussed that this type of service should be contractual, thereby bringing in money for DMDA and the ABIP. Equally, Henry mentioned that FEWSNET is also interested in potentially contracting MISTOWA ABIPs to do market analysis. This would also be a paid-for service. We encouraged Ahmed to follow up on these leads and focus on developing services aimed at this type of clientele in addition to services designed for individual producers and traders. After discussing at the DMDA office, we toured the market, various commodity sections, warehouses, and talked with a few traders along the way (including "Mrs. Fire", the success story woman that trades gari with Niger after making necessary contacts through TradeNet). I asked her if she continues to trade with Niger and she confirmed that she does, and that traders from Niger come to her for gari every week! I encouraged her to continue to report deals made to Gafar. In general, while talking to DMDA member traders I did get the feeling that TradeNet has helped many of them make deals in neighboring countries but it is clear that they are very reluctant to report deals made.

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Directly after Dawanau we continued on to Yankaba market to visit the new ABIP there set up by the Fresh Produce Association. So far they have invested and received help from the local government to receive three computers, printer and dial up internet connectivity (which is very slow). We met board members and regular members of the Fresh Produce Association of Traders of Yankaba where the ABIP has been established. Many of them have been trained in using internet at DMDA/Dawanau ABIP and have started using TradeNet to make contacts and deals. They are eager to get their own ABIP up and running in Yankaba but are limited by slow internet speed which will not allow productive training. They would like MISTOWA to assist them with a grant for better connectivity and support in the form of other equipment (copier, fax, etc.) so that they can be self-sustaining in the long run. I made no promises but said I would bring this up with the rest of the team when back in Accra. For now, the ABIP is being managed by Mrs. Ajao (Gafar's wife). She is volunteering to do this until the association finds someone permanent that she can train to take her place. She was a participant at the training in Kaduna this week and is very sharp and eager to establish a solid ABIP in Yankaba.

Meeting with Abdulkadir Gudugi and Nduka Okaro USAID Abuja

Henry and I visited USAID on Friday and met with Mr. Gudugi and Okaro. They are the CTOs for the MARKETS and REFORMS projects at USAID in Abuja. Henry and I explained the reason for my visit to Nigeria (to assist the ABIP training) and explained a bit about what an ABIP is and what type of services the ABIP can provide. They were both aware of the project and idea of an ABIP but we provided more details about our aim to make the ABIPs sustainable and how. They too explained a bit more about the MARKETS and REFORMS project with which Henry has already started collaboration through MISTOWA advocacy efforts. The visit only lasted about 20 minutes as they had another meeting they had to attend.

Unable to meet with ECOWAS

Henry and I went to ECOWAS to meet with someone (either the head of agriculture, Dr. Limane Barage or Dr Afolabi), but everyone had either traveled or was in meeting throughout the day. As a result we were not able to meet them.

TRIP 3: Dr. Kofi Debrah Trip Report Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso December 12-18, 2006

Purpose of the trip:

- Presentation of MISTOWA experiences at a regional workshop on "Capacity Building for the Strategic Development of Horticultural and Agricultural Value Chains in Sub-Saharan Africa" workshop organized by The Hub, The World Bank and Groupe EIER-ESTHER, Burkina Faso
- Participation in the 4th Annual Forum of ECOWAS' West African Civil Society Forum (WACSOF)
- Working visit and discussions with MISTOWA staff in Ouagadougou

Major Conclusions

- The Value Chain workshop participants identified capacity building needs and institutions that provide them. Workshop organizers are developing a regional strategy to facilitate the provision of appropriate training.
- IFDC/MISTOWA was mandated to lead the Food, Agriculture and Environment Thematic Advocacy Working group within the WACSOF.
- MISTOWA experiences were shared with the MCC group undertaking due diligence in support of the Burkina Faso MCC application.
- Responsibilities were re-assigned among MISTOWA Burkina Faso staff in the light of staffing adjustments.

Itinerary

Dec 11	Accra – Techiman, Ghana
Dec 12	Techiman, Ghana – Ouagadougou., Burkina Faso
Dec 18	Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso – Tamale, Ghana
Dec 19	Tamale - Accra

Major persons contacted

- Participants at the Value Chain Workshop including:

- Abdoulaye Mbengue, Trade & Investment Specialist, USAID/Senegal
- Christoph Lesueur, Expert in Markets and Competitiveness, The Hub, Senegal
- Patrick Labaste, Jean Luc Bosio, Malik Antoine and Christophe Ravry, The World Bank
- Rueben Coffie, Rowland Adade, TIPCEE, Accra ; Joseph Faalong, Mawuli Agboka, MOFA/AGSSIP (Ghana); Sam Brew, Ghana Export Promotion Council
- Mark Huisenga, Director of Operations, MCC, Washington, Rachel Balsham, Program Asst. MCC/Washington; Koudregu Zongo, Christophe Some and Sigyan Campaore, Millennium Account Compact, Burkina Faso.
- IFDC and Burkina Faso MISTOWA staff

Description of activities

Meetings in Ghana, en route to Ouagadougou

I visited Techiman where Musa Taylor, MISTOWA Coordinator/Ghana and Tharzia Akwetey, Koforidua ABIP manager were facilitating an ABIP training for 13 ABIP managers from the different regions in Ghana. I interacted with them to discuss the training and their expectation as well as any questions they might have. In general, the participants confirmed that the training was useful.

Meetings in Ouagadougou

I was involved in four types of meetings: The Value Chain Workshop; the WACSOFF forum, the MCC meeting and Staff interactions:

The Value Chain workshop (12-15 Dec)

MISTOWA was invited to share its experiences in building skills of producers and traders in information technology, access to market information, organizational management and advocacy. The workshop was preceded by 3 weeks of email discussions on value chain capacity building involving some 250 participants. The workshop itself was attended by about 60 persons from Benin, Burkina Faso, Ghana, Senegal and Uganda. Presentations included experiences of training institutions, the ministries, universities, USAID projects and others. The types of, supply and demand of capacity building needs of the various actors in the value chain were discussed. The organizers hope to develop a discussion platform to exchange information between the suppliers and demanders of the appropriate capacity building within the horticultural and agricultural value chains. The platform will complement existing platforms/Internet sites such as www.hubrural.org and www.tradenet.biz.

WACSOFF Forum (15-18 Dec)

WACSOFF holds an annual forum to discuss and table issues of concern that Civil Society wishes to be addressed by the ECOWAS Heads of State. MISTOWA sponsored a delegation of 22 producers and traders to this year's annual forum. They came from 6 countries and had previously attended MISTOWA advocacy training. The highlight of the three day forum is the formation of the Food, Agriculture and Environment Advocacy Thematic working group to work with the WACSOFF Secretariat during the year on issues related to agricultural and environment advocacy. IFDC/MISTOWA was named as leader and convener of the thematic working group which consists of 20 members from the 15 ECOWAS countries. Ms Getrude Adu-Yebo, Chairperson of the Ghana Agricultural Producers' and Traders Organization (GAPTO) was elected to serve on the WACSOFF Executive Committee. Issues of road transport harassment and improved access to quality and affordable agricultural inputs were transmitted by the thematic group to be tabled on the agenda of the ECOWA Heads of State to be held in Ouagadougou on December 22, 2006.

MCC Meeting (15 Dec)

At the request of the MCC team doing "due diligence" to assess Burkina Faso's MCC application, I presented the MISTOWA project with particular emphasis on private sector initiatives to provide timely and accurate market information to producers and traders. The delegation was led by Mark Huisenga, Director of Operations, MCC, Washington and was accompanied by staff of the MCC in Burkina Faso. Other IFDC project leaders presented various aspects of their activities. The areas identified by IFDC for consideration by the MCC in Burkina Faso included integrated soil fertility management in the irrigated perimeters of

Burkina Faso, reinforcement of the capacities and distribution points of agricultural inputs and the extension of the Agribusiness Information Points to make market information more accessible. The market information component was discussed into great detail and apparently interested the MCC. He asked that I send Burkina Faso-specific aspects of MISTOWA (producer and trader organizations trained, the commodity chains represented, value of trade, number and distribution of the Agribusiness information points etc) to the team in Washington. According to Mr. Huisenga, the information would be useful for further assessment by the next MCC assessment mission to Burkina in January 2007.

Staff Interactions (Dec 15-18)

I had discussions with Mr Wim van Campen, MIR Coordinator and IFDC representative in Burkina Faso concerning staff re-alignment and re-assignment of responsibilities. I worked with Mr Charles Nouatin and evaluated his performance. I participated in the farewell party organized by the staff for Mr. Sami Traore, Burkina Faso MISTOWA coordinator. Mr Traore is one of the staff affected by the staff reduction plan resulting from the MISTOWA budget and period reduction. His activities will be shared among Charles Nouatin, Marie Laurentine Ilboudo and Sandrine Tabsoda. IFDC Burkina will provide administrative support.

TRIP 4: Patrice Annequin Trip Report Dakar, Senegal, 31 Oct to 3 Nov, 2006

Purpose of the trip:

- Participate in and supervise the first ABIP business training for partners in Senegal (1-3 nov)
- Meet with UNOPS major programs Fidafrique and HubRural

Major Conclusions

1. MISTOWA successfully conducted the first training for key ABIP managers in Senegal in collaboration with CNCR, ESCOM (business) and Icone Consulting (ICT)
2. FIDAFRIQUE expressed its interest to support MISTOWA efforts to link with existing and new roots & tubers projects in Ghana, Nigeria, Benin and Cameroon.
3. HUB RURAL, a multi-donor initiative based in Dakar, commands MISTOWA activities, strategies and tools and could support IFDC to give more exposure to the project to the donor community, governments and regional institutions.

Itinerary

Oct 31 Accra (08:20) – Dakar (16:00)
Nov 3 Dakar (17:20) – Accra (22:40)

Major persons contacted

- Marius DIA, information / communication officer CNCR
- Gilles MERSADIER, Fidafrique Coordinator
- Ibrahim Assane MAYAKI, Executive Director of the Hub, Marc ATOUGA (ag policies) and Christophe LESUEUR (ag markets)

Description of activities

Business training for ABIP manager (1-3 Nov)

8 participants attended the first 3-days business training for ABIP managers: 3 from CNCR (Dakar, Tambacounda and Louga); FNPM for ROESAO/CONASEN, FEILTS, ASESCAW, UNACOIS, and SIM/CSA (RESIMAO). Prepared by Sadibou Gueye and Marius Dia (CNCR) and held at CNCR/APROSEB meeting room.

Although the training was wedged between Nov 1 holiday and the Friday prayer, the proposed program was completed, except for the last financial sessions (statements, budgeting, ...).

The ABIP concept needs to be more clearly explained and exposed to our partners, and we (especially MISTOWA country coordinators and trainers appointed to help them) should be careful to present this concept as one they can use to start something or strengthen what they have, and not one MISTOWA wants them to apply. For instance, CNCR has already an ABIP-like initiative and program running for several years with the “Pench” installed at regional level, and UNACOIS has an info / com service which is very close to what an ABIP is likely to do.

The major concern is that despite all efforts and trainings provided to this small groups of partners, and their apparent willingness to take advantage and make use of the tools (tradenet, groups, ABIP), they don't contribute to the general network and products as Senegal should: very limited quantity of prices available, not a single offer posted on the TradeNet, no or very limited contributions and exchange of info among partners apart those requested under equipments / competitive grant agreements.

Recommendations:

- Assist key partners to run their ABIP as a business:
 - UNACOIS and FEILTS seem to have highest potential among partners.
 - UNACOIS can use its network on several key markets as effective ABIP, coordinated by Ousmane Sy from the HQ in Dakar.
- Using TradeNet groups to give more exposure to MISTOWA partners
 - Most of participants created their own website during the training. Sadibou should support them constantly to use, update and feed their sites. Yachina must be the tech support from MISTOWA in Accra.
 - More promotion on TradeNet and its features must be brought by Sadibou, with Marius Dia's help, to CNCR and its members, at national level (FONGS, APROSEB, ANCAR, etc) and regional level (pench).
- Assist ABIP managers to
 - Build directories for members and post them on their groups sites
 - Post offers on TradeNet
 - Post prices on TradeNet

New groups available on TradeNet

ASECAW	www.tradenet.biz/asescaw	owner : Amadou Diop
CRCL LOUGA	www.tradenet.biz/FAPAL	owner : Malick Sow
FEILTS	www.tradenet.biz/feitls	owner : Amadou Diallo
FPNM	www.tradenet.biz/?i=1000010&g=group	owner : Diery Gaye
SIM/CSA	www.tradenet.biz/SIMCSA	owner : Mohamadou Ndiaye
UNACOIS	www.tradenet.biz/unacois	owner : Ousmane Sy Ndiaye

Meetings with Fidafrigue and HubRural (Nov 1, Nov 2)

With Gilles Mersadier, Fidafrigue coordinator (www.fidafrigue.org) for IFAD R&T projects:

- We discussed about outcomes of the participation of 6 staff from 3 IFAD funded roots and tubers projects (Cameroun, Nigeria, and Ghana) in the IFDC MISTOWA MIS international training program in Accra, October 2006.
- TradeNet and ABIP are 2 very useful tools for these projects, and we convened to develop some ideas and proposals during Gilles's stay in Accra for the CTA workshop (6-10 Nov).
- The October issue of the Fidafrigue newsletter features MISTOWA, TradeNet and the ABIP guideline – http://www.fidafrigue.net/IMG/pdf/FDF_infos9-2.pdf

With Christophe Lesueur and Marc Atouga at the Hub (www.hubrural.org)

- “The Hub's goal is to assist West and Central African stakeholders (States, Inter-governmental Organisations, Civil Society Organisations and Development Partners) to promote coherence in rural development programmes worldwide.”
- Dr Debrah and I agreed to attend and present the MISTOWA project, goals, tools, and results at the “Strategic Development of Horticulture Supply chains in Sub Saharan Africa” workshop organized in Ouagadougou Dec 12-15 by The World Bank and the Hub. Website for this workshop (goals, participants, program, resources):
<http://web.worldbank.org/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/WBI/WBIPROGRAMS/RPDLPROGRAM/0,,contentMDK:21090090~pagePK:64156158~piPK:64152884~theSitePK:459597,00.html>

- We also discussed the opportunity to use the Hub's funds and resources to take stock of MISTOWA's successes and lessons learnt. MISTOWA should submit a brief concept note to call for a "study" supported by the Hub that can be conducted in first half of 2007. This could help MISTOWA to prepare its end of projects documents and to have a better exposure towards potential partners for the future.

TRIP 5: Claudia LaLumia Trip Report Lome, Togo, Oct 16-20, 2006

Purpose of the trip:

- Assist Country Coordinator during PICA management training (including MIS/ICT and business training aspects). Test business training modules to identify strengths and weaknesses, areas in need of improvement and the feasibility of timing (how much time actually needs to be allocated to each session).

Major Conclusions

- The PICA training went well. Principal trainers were Raoul, myself, Dan Meuller (Peace Corps volunteer) and Gisele. All trainers did a good job with their sessions and time management was not too problematic. We did end up pushing the final business (financial management) session on cash flow statement to the next training. This was not so much due to time constraints but moreso due to the fact that we decided it would be better to address this subject after PICAs start keeping their cash books and have actual information on which to base the cash flow statement. Participants' formal evaluations were very positive, the only recurring negative comment being that the training program was a bit too heavy for the time allocated. Training content was appropriate to participants' level even though there were people from various groups (RESIMAO, Chambre d'Agriculture, OP/OC PICAs). The group was very dynamic and actively participated during the sessions, work groups and during individual exercises. Each PICA manager identified his/her products/services, practiced fixing prices, got an idea of promotion strategies they could employ, elaborated foreseen expense and revenue budgets, analyzed them by establishing their cash flow budgets, and practiced readjusting their budgets in an effort to cover costs of running the PICA. Customer service sessions went well with skits and scenarios used to accentuate learning points. RESIMAO and Tradenet sessions with Yachina were compromised by the fact that internet connectivity for participants was not available. Rather, Yachina walked them through the new functions and overview of the sites through demonstration on-line with only one computer (projections).

Itinerary

October 16	Accra-Lome (by road)
October 17-19	Lome
October 20	Lome-Accra (by road)

Major persons contacted

- MISTOWA team at IFDC Lome (Raoul, Gisele, and Dan as a trainer)
- Rob Groot for a brief courtesy visit
- Managers for all 10 Togo PICAs (training participants)

Description of activities

ABIP management training and up-date on establishment of PICAs

As mentioned in the above conclusions, the training was in general a success. Some general points to be noted:

- One of the managers of the two gardeners groups scheduled to receive equipment from MISTOWA missed the entire first day of the training. This was quite disappointing but we stressed that he must attend all of the next training. As it turns out he missed that day due to illness.
- The training participant (woman) sent from Kpalime was quite weak with respect to the idea of the PICA and certainly financial management. If she is really going to be the manager of that PICA Raoul will have to provide her with significant support to bring her up to a sufficient level of competency.

- Those that are scheduled to receive equipment from MISTOWA must receive it as soon as possible. There should be absolutely no reason that they do not receive their equipment in November. Things have not moved as quickly with respect to this as they should or could have, and this needs to be addressed to bring Togo up to speed if they are to attain a significant level of progress on PICA development by Sept 2007.
- From my perspective it seems that the following PICA managers/locations have particularly high potential: Atakpame (the manager is very dynamic and quick, business oriented), gardeners group in Lome/Baguida (not the guy that came late as in addition to coming late he was not that productive during the training- he may surprise us later though), RESIMAO (if Lawson implements all that he planned during the training and the government allows them to start earning revenue even just to support costs), Tchamba has a very dynamic and progressive, experienced manager. Tchamba is not however on the list of PICAs. Mr Lamboni is the manger of the cashew processing factory in Tchamba that I have visited and was Dan's counterpart. He has very good ideas for a solid PICA. I promised him nothing but encouraged him to move ahead with his ideas to attract MISTOWA attention and confidence for potential future collaboration. ROESAO main office in Kojoviakope has potential but Fafa (manager) will need close follow-up from Raoul to get things moving. PROCOPAS also has solid potential with Dan's guidance and tutelage. Their constraint (would could also be a benefit) is that they are practically in the same office with a cyber café that has several computers. Thus, many of the income generating activities linked to navigation, office services, etc. are already covered by the cyber. However, they are thinking of accessing a niche clientele being the producers as many of them are not at all familiar with the net and would be shy to go into the cyber café. PROCOPAS could provide services to these shy producers (open e-mail accounts, assisted net search, training in NTIC, etc.)..... and to all that specifically need market information. Chamber of Agriculture (Tchakpedeau) also has very modest but solid ideas. Though their location in Lome is not at all ideal, and the regional chambers are not equipped, Tchakpedeau has already identified some services the regions could provide in collaboration with the office in Lome. For the office in Lome they urgently need a internet connection which he says will be resolved soon. ROESAO Kpalime office is already equipped (got equipment from the previous Foire activity and they have their own equipment as well) but needs on-going connectivity. They can get along on their own... MISTOWA will not be providing them with any additional equipment or connectivity.

**TRIP 6: Claudia LaLumia Trip Report
Kano, Abuja and Kaduna, Nigeria, Nov 26- Dec 2, 2006**

Purpose of the trip:

- Co-facilitate ABIP management training in Kaduna.
- Visit FEPSAN office and ABIP in Kaduna.
- Visit DMDA ABIP and Dawanu market to check on ABIP development, discuss Government of Nigeria's recent declarations that they intend to support development of Dawanu market and how.
- Visit Yankaba market and the new ABIP recently established there by Perishable products Association.
- Meet with Agricultural Economist, Abdulkadir Gudugi (CTO MARKETS project) and Nduka Okaro, Ag & Environment Specialist (CTO REFORMS) project at USAID in Abuja.

Itinerary

November 26	Accra-Lagos-Abuja-Kaduna (AM flight to Abuja then road to Kaduna)
November 27-29	Kaduna
November 30	Kaduna-Kano-Kaduna by road
December 1	Kaduna-Abuja by road
December 2	Abuja-Accra (11AM flight)

Major persons contacted

- 14 ABIP managers: Participants at the training.
- Mr. Ahmed Rabiu Kwa, Executive Secretary FEPSAN
- Alhadji Ahmed (Imam), Executive Secretary DMDA
- Abdulkadir Gudugi and Nduka Okaro, USAID Abuja

Major Conclusions

The ABIP training

- The ABIP training went very well with 14 ABIP managers (only one missed the last day as he was called back to Kano for something). Participants were very engaged and interactive throughout all sessions. We were able to cover all content planned. The next training will be scheduled in February and will pick up where we left off on session 4 (financial management) before continuing on to following sessions.
- The training was held at the CRC in Kaduna and Abdulfattah Yusuf did an excellent job of coordinating logistics of using the center facilities. Internet connectivity was available for all participants although the connection was sometimes very slow. Despite this constraint the participants remained very interested and patient throughout the sessions.
- Once again (as in other countries) I had the impression that the ABIP managers are not adequately well versed in the use of TradeNet. The ICT sessions focused on TradeNet use exclusively but the topics were quite elementary for a group that has already received a number of Tradenet and ICT trainings (mainly focusing on uploading prices, using SMS to receive prices, researching prices on the site, configuring new users, etc.). The Tradegroups function was demonstrated and the DMDA website was shown.
- The group of trainers did an excellent job complementing each other, sharing tasks and the presentation of various sessions. Trainers included: Gabriel Afu, Gafar Ajao, Kuku Kolawole, Henry Ekpiken, Abdulfattah Yusuf and myself. Dr. Richard Okechukwo from, NAMIN also visited the training to present NAMIN's progress registering as a Ltd. and ideas pertaining to their future partnership with MTN.
- Not all of the ABIP managers on the final list of ABIPs were invited to the training, and a couple additional ABIP managers *were* invited (1 additional FEPSAN member organization and the Yankaba ABIP representative). The two add ons are individuals and associations that have received previous MISTOWA-organized training. Those on the final list of ABIPs but not invited were NAMIS and CRC representative offices that received ICT equipment under Dimina but which have not previously attended MISTOWA trainings. At any rate all participants know MISTOWA, the ABIP concept and have been trained several times on TradeNet and ICT use.

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information. We discussed that this type of service should be contractual, thereby bringing in money for DMDA and the ABIP. Equally, Henry mentioned that FEWSNET is also interested in potentially contracting MISTOWA ABIPs to do market analysis. This would also be a paid-for service. We encouraged Ahmed to follow up on these leads and focus on developing services aimed at this type of clientele in addition to services designed for individual producers and traders. After discussing at the DMDA office, we toured the market, various commodity sections, warehouses, and talked with a few traders along the way (including "Mrs. Fire", the success story woman that trades gari with Niger after making necessary contacts through TradeNet). I asked her if she continues to trade with Niger and she confirmed that she does, and that traders from Niger come to her for gari every week! I encouraged her to continue to report deals made to Gafar. In general, while talking to DMDA member traders I did get the feeling that TradeNet has helped many of them make deals in neighboring countries but it is clear that they are very reluctant to report deals made.

Visit to Yankaba market

Directly after Dawanu we continued on to Yankaba market to visit the new ABIP there set up by the Fresh Produce Association. So far they have invested and received help from the local government to receive three computers, printer and dial up internet connectivity (which is very slow). We met board members and regular members of the Fresh Produce Association of Traders of Yankaba where the ABIP has been established. Many of them have been trained in using internet at DMDA/Dawanu ABIP and have started using TradeNet to make contacts and deals. They are eager to get their own ABIP up and running in Yankaba but are limited by slow internet speed which will not allow productive training. They would like MISTOWA to assist them with a grant for better connectivity and support in the form of other equipment (copier, fax, etc.) so that they can be self-sustaining in the long run. I made no promises but said I would bring this up with the rest of the team when back in Accra. For now, the ABIP is being managed by Mrs. Ajao (Gafar's wife). She is volunteering to do this until the association finds someone permanent that she can train to take her place. She was a participant at the training in Kaduna this week and is very sharp and eager to establish a solid ABIP in Yankaba.

Meeting with Abdulkadir Gudugi and Nduka Okaro USAID Abuja

Henry and I visited USAID on Friday and met with Mr. Gudigi and Okaro. They are the CTOs for the MARKETS and REFORMS projects at USAID in Abuja. Henry and I explained the reason for my visit to Nigeria (to assist the ABIP training) and explained a bit about what an ABIP is and what type of services the ABIP can provide. They were both aware of the project and idea of an ABIP but we provided more details about our aim to make the ABIPs sustainable and how. They too explained a bit more about the MARKETS and REFORMS project with which Henry has already started collaboration through MISTOWA advocacy efforts. The visit only lasted about 20 minutes as they had another meeting they had to attend.

Unable to meet with ECOWAS

Henry and I went to ECOWAS to meet with someone (either the head of agriculture, Dr. Limane Barage or Dr Afolabi), but everyone had either traveled or was in meeting throughout the day. As a result we were not able to see anyone.