



MISTOWA

Networks of Regional Market Information Systems and Traders' Organizations in West Africa
Réseaux Régionaux de Systèmes d'Information de Marché et de Commerce Agricole en Afrique de l'Ouest



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Editorial

This month's newsletter reviews the major achievements of the historic African Fertilizer Summit in early June. This important event, organized in part by IFDC, brought together heads of state and other representatives from most sub-Saharan countries as well as renowned agricultural experts to discuss the ways and means of actualizing a "Green Revolution" in the sub-region. MISTOWA staff persons attended and used the opportunity to explain the MISTOWA project to interested passers-by.

We also draw attention to MISTOWA's new "focal point" persons soon to be established in Niger, Guinea and Côte d'Ivoire, and examine new trends in organizational development within the West African rice sub-sector, including the emergence of new rice-focused organizations on both national and regional levels, particularly their efforts to increase the market share of locally-produced rice.



The African Fertilizer Summit held in Abuja, Nigeria this past month attracted attention from all over the world. IFDC's booth, shown above, featured the MISTOWA project's efforts as part of its display on work it is doing in the West African sub-region. The Summit focused attention on the need for quality agricultural inputs to be available to producers and traders, to enhance the competitive ability of African agribusinesses in and out of Africa.

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Niger 'Focal Point' now official; two more on the way!

MISTOWA began its activities in 2004 by concentrating its efforts on countries where IFDC offices were located: in Benin, Burkina Faso, Ghana, Nigeria, Senegal and Mali and planned to expand the project to other West African countries. Niger, Côte d'Ivoire, and Guinea were recently included but instead of establishing full-service offices, MISTOWA collaborated with partners to identify local, **Focal Point persons** who will assist in managing in-country MISTOWA activities. Focal Point persons are seasoned agribusiness professionals already working with reputable agricultural organizations, fully capable of undertaking representational and other MISTOWA-related duties in their countries, and able to work with all partners in implementing MISTOWA project activities.

In May 2006, a MISTOWA team led by Claudia LaLumia, MISTOWA's Business and Trade Advisor, and including Emmanuel Alognikou, the MISTOWA



Countries shaded green already have IFDC offices. Red countries will have Focal Point persons to coordinate project activities.

Training and Grants Coordinator, and Ibrahima Toure, MISTOWA's Trade Organization Advisor and Mali Coordinator, conducted the first major visit to Niger to officially launch MISTOWA operations there.

Given the major food security crisis faced by Niger in recent years, this addition to

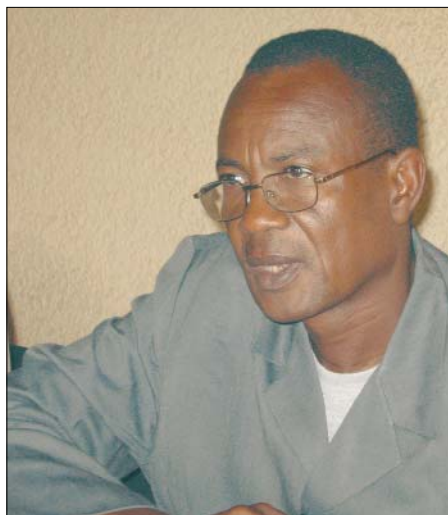
NEWSLETTER



MISTOWA's targeted countries is significant. There is much to be accomplished in Niger in order to carry out the project's primary objective of increasing intraregional trade.

The team met with various partners and confirmed the nomination of Sani Laouli Addoh as the official MISTOWA Focal Point person for the country. Addoh will be responsible for organizing all of MISTOWA's activities in Niger, including maintaining constant communication with present partners and identifying new partners as appropriate. He will ensure communication between Niger and MISTOWA's headquarters in Accra, Ghana, Niger's participation in regional events, and project administration and budgeting as well as manage grants accorded to partners in Niger. Addoh is currently working as the Director of Niger's Agricultural Market Information System (SIM-A). He will continue to work in this capacity while dedicating part of his time to coordinating MISTOWA's efforts.

Addoh explained that both organizations have worked closely in the past to provide RESIMAO (Network of Market Information Systems of West Africa) with technical and other sup-



Mr. Sani Laouli Addoh, MISTOWA's first Focal Point person for Niger, talks to MISTOWA staff about his plans for working with current project partners and identifying potential new partners within Niger.

port. "As a close partner to SIMA, we were already actively involved in MISTOWA's activities, especially in facilitating market linkages and MIS development," he continued.

"One of the first things I will do is begin to support the development of producer and trader organizations in Niger," Addoh said. "We have already identified

potential Agribusiness Information Points with two commodity-based organizations."

LaLumia praised Addoh's selection as Niger's Focal Point person, saying, "We have high expectations for MISTOWA activities in Niger and feel that Mr Addoh is a very valuable addition to our team given his vast experience with market information collection and dissemination in Niger." LaLumia explained that Addoh has already begun to take an inventory of all agribusiness related organizations working in Niger who are potential partners.

Two other country Focal Points will be appointed in the near future. Hawa Soumah of REGOSA (Guinean Network of Economic Operators in the Agro-Food Sector) has been identified by MISTOWA personnel as the Guinean focal point person. Her appointment is expected to be confirmed in July 2006. Similarly, in August 2006 a Focal Point person will be identified to serve Côte d'Ivoire. Both appointments will occur just in time for the regional Annual Work Plan Workshop that will be held in late August 2006 in Niger, to be attended by all MISTOWA Country Coordinators and Focal Point persons. ■

West African rice sector organizations play an increasingly vital role

In recent years, the rice sector in West Africa has seen the emergence of several rice-focused organizations, of national or regional scope, and including not only producers and traders, but also processors, seed dealers, researchers and numerous other stakeholders. All of these groups realize that to respond effectively to the increased demand for quality, affordable rice in West Africa, they must become more competitive in each part of the rice commodity chain. Two of the chief challenges they face are the low price of imported rice and the consumer belief that imported rice is better than locally-grown rice.

To overcome these and other issues, those involved in this sector have taken substantial steps to better support and strengthen the organizations that represent rice sector interests. In general, these organizations fall into three broad categories: producer associations, inter-professional associations and groups known as "watch-dog" organizations or "observatories".

Market share of imported rice

	consumption per kg/person/year	percentage of imported rice
Benin	12	58%
Burkina Faso	20	70%
Ghana	26	65%
Guinea	92	38%
Mali	50	24%
Niger	14	90%
Senegal	70	80%

Source: Atelier PRA/Riz, May 2004

Many rice sector organizations are advocating for added taxes and tariffs on imported rice in order to encourage greater consumption of locally-produced rice, and they view dependency on imported rice as a food security concern.

Producer Organizations

In ECOWAS countries, rice producers are represented by national organizations focused on particular commodity chains. For instance, in Benin, the Rice

Farmers' Collaborative Council of Benin was inaugurated in May of 2006, as an umbrella organization to defend the interests of rice farmers and to promote this sub-sector on the national and

international level. On a regional level, ROPPA (Network of Farmers' Organizations and Agricultural Producers of West Africa) has incorporated the concerns of rice producers into its activities. ROPPA has advocated for agricultural and tax policies that will protect rice producers. The push for favorable policies has received increasing support throughout the region, as shown by the 2005 OXFAM Intermon awareness campaign launched in Burkina Faso to sensitize government authorities on the affect of unfair competition caused by the importation of rice on local producers and traders.

Inter-professional Organizations

Inter-professional organizations deal with cross-cutting concerns regardless of the role in the rice commodity chain. These organizations may include producers, traders, or any other stakeholders concerned with West African rice. Two excellent examples are found in Burkina Faso and Ghana, with Burkina's National Union of Rice Producers (UNPR-B) and the Ghana Rice Inter Professional Body (GRIB).

Formed in July 2004, GRIB is composed of farmers, processors, brokers and importers, and addresses food security concerns, aiming to make Ghana self-sufficient in rice production. Among its successes, GRIB has managed to secure a loan from the Apex Body of Rural Banks for the purchase of equipment for quality improvement; negotiated with the Ministry of Finance for the creation of a credit line with reduced interest rates, and induced the Government of Ghana to buy locally grown rice for its institutions.

This year in Burkina Faso, the National Union of Rice Producers (UNPR-B) with the support of Burkina Faso Farmers' Confederation created the Inter-professional Committee on Rice (CIR-B) that assembles local rice producers and traders, as well as the association of rice importers.

Watch-dogs (Observatories)

The first watch-dog organizations, or observatories, in West Africa were formed as national initiatives and are either in the private or public sector. Many of the observatories were formed with the assistance of a project known as PRIAF-Riz (Project for the Reinforcement of Information of Rice Industry Actors in Matters of Market



Membership in a producer organization can benefit farmers by increasing information exchange with other farmers, such as during this study tour for rice producers.

and Politics). Established in 2003, it encourages West African coordination in the rice sector to improve availability of information and increase the analytical and negotiation capabilities of professional organizations.

These observatories monitor rice production, market information, product quality and trade information and all other aspects of the rice sector. Burkina Faso's private rice observatory is OnRiz. Mali's InfoRiz observatory is a project of the Chambers of Agriculture. Guinea's observatory OniRiz is part of the public sector under the Ministry of Agriculture.

All of these groups are coordinated under RIZAO, the Network for Rice Observatories in West Africa. RIZAO was established in May 2004, with three basic objectives:

- 1) to strengthen the dialog and exchange among the various rice observatories,
- 2) to enable traders and producers to actively participate in the elaboration and implementation of rice-related policies at national and regional levels; and
- 3) to contribute to the structuring of a rice production sector at the regional level.

RIZAO serves in an advisory capacity to both ECOWAS and WAEMU on issues of concern to the rice industry throughout the region. RIZAO members are also encouraged to work on a national level to advocate to their gov-

ernments, especially the Ministries of Agriculture and the Ministries of Foreign Affairs.

MISTOWA supports the rice sector

During the May 2006 PRIAF workshop held in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso, MISTOWA was identified as a key organization able to provide support to help disseminate information on improving the rice sector in West Africa. The workshop brought together representatives from Benin, Burkina Faso, Senegal, Ghana, Niger, Mali and Cameroon to discuss the way forward for the West African rice sector, including issues concerning duties and tariffs. MISTOWA's participation in developing the rice sector was recognized as a strong asset.

RIZAO has scheduled a follow-up regional workshop in July 2006 in Senegal to finalize a new strategic plan for supporting the rice sector in West Africa. The workshop will launch a new specialized training manual and include a meeting to develop a strategy for the harmonization in the collection and diffusion of information on rice and to examine the possibility of integrating the information available on the West African Agricultural Trade Portal (www.wa-agritrade.net).

“MISTOWA will support all initiatives that can help rice sector be more competitive and provide food security and a better life for West Africans,” says Patrice Annequin, MISTOWA's Deputy Chief of Party. ■

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Network of Farmers'
Organizations and Agricultural
Producers of West Africa

Africa's Green Revolution

"All the regions of the world—Asia, Latin America—that have increased the levels of use of fertilizers have been able to rapidly increase their productivity. But Africa, because it has not been using fertilizer has [lost] productivity. In fact, right now, Africa loses \$4 billion dollars worth of soil nutrients every year," explained Dr. Akin Adesina, Associate Director of the New York-based Rockefeller Foundation in a June 14, 2006 interview by the Nigerian newspaper, *THISDAY*.

To address this situation and raise awareness about the role of fertilizer in stimulating sustainable productivity growth in African agriculture, NEPAD (New Partnership for Africa's Development), the African Union and IFDC convened the African Fertilizer Summit from June 9-13 2006. The Summit's ultimate aim was to ignite Africa's own 'Green Revolution,' similar to other parts of the developing world.

The Summit assembled heads of state and governments from more than 40 African nations, who remarkably agreed to lift all cross-border taxes and tariffs on fertilizer. Participants also agreed to establish a fertilizer financing mechanism within the African Development Bank to significantly increase the availability and access to fertilizer on the continent.

The summit managed to build a consensus around other critical key issues towards increasing the use of fertilizer in Africa to accelerate the access of millions of poor farmers to fertilizer and other complementary inputs and help them raise their farm production, achieve food security, and reduce poverty.

On June 12, the African Union unanimously agreed to an ambitious program for increasing farmers' access to fertilizers. Although focused on crop nutrients, the outcome document, called the "Abuja Declaration on Fertilizer for an African Green Revolution" also considers enabling factors such as strengthening farmer

organizations, improving infrastructure and the need to combine fertilizer use with other modern agricultural inputs. Heads of State and Government endorsed the Declaration at a special summit on June 13.

For more information on the outcome of the Summit, see www.africafertilizersummit.org. ■

Summary of the Twelve Resolutions

(International Fertilizer Industry Association)

1. Raise average fertilizer use in Africa to 50 kg per hectare by 2015.
2. Call for the removal of all duties and taxes and harmonize policies and regulations for duty- and tax-free movement of fertilizers across regions by mid-2007.
3. Develop networks of input dealers and community-based distribution systems by mid-2007.
4. Strengthen farmers groups, civil society and the private sector by 2007;
5. Target subsidies to help the poorest farmers access fertilizers;
6. Accelerated investment in infrastructure, fiscal incentives and output markets;
7. National financing facilities for input suppliers;
8. Establishment of regional procurement and distribution facilities;
9. Greater fertilizer production in Africa, including blending;
10. Recommend that governments improve farmer access to quality seeds, irrigation, extension services, market information and soil testing/mapping, while exercising due diligence towards the environment;
11. Development of African Fertilizer Financing Mechanism (by close of the Summit, US \$20 million was already pledged)
12. Monitoring and evaluating system on implementation of the resolutions.

Upcoming Events

4 July - Bamako, Mali: Shea butter sub-sector consultative committee meeting. Contact: Ibrahim Toure itoure@ifdc.org

6-7 July - Abuja, Nigeria: RIFAN training on ABIP. Contact: Henry Ekpiken ehenry@ifdc.org

11-13 July - Kaduna, Nigeria: ICT and gender integration of HIV/AIDS training. Contact: Henry Ekpiken ehenry@ifdc.org

13 July - Accra, Ghana: Stakeholders' consultative work-

shop. Contact: Musa Taylor mtaylor@ifdc.org

18-19 July - Dakar, Senegal: Presentation of final Advocacy Workshop action plan. Contact: Sadibou Gueye sgueye@ifdc.org

19-21 July - Kaduna, Nigeria: NAMIN workshop. Contact: Henry Ekpiken ehenry@ifdc.org

24-26 July - Dakar, Senegal: Training of POs & TOs in international trade (ROESAO, FACIA,

CNCR, RESIMAO). Contact: Sadibou Gueye sgueye@ifdc.org

25-26 July - Dakar, Senegal: Regional Work Plan Meeting with partners (ROESAO, FACIA, CNCR, RESIMAO). Contact: Sadibou Gueye sgueye@ifdc.org

27-29 July - Dakar/Saint-Louis/Richard-Toll/Podor, Senegal: Follow-up visits of ABIPs and survey of prospective Internet Access Points. Contact: Sadibou Gueye sgueye@ifdc.org

More details on MISTOWA can be found at <http://events.mistowa.org/>.

To announce an event, please send us a message before the 25th of the month to: info@mistowa.org.