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A closer look at our producer & trader organization partners

Editorial

Valued readers, welcome to the 7th edition of the MISTOWA information newsletter.

In this edition we take a closer look at the status and functioning of the producer and trader organizations in 5 countries where a special-purpose survey was undertaken. We also bring you up to date on the training of market enumerators as well as other upcoming events.



Alhaji Aligatu (first from left), chairman of the Nima Grains Traders Association, providing information to complete a questionnaire on behalf of the association.

AN INVENTORY OF PRODUCER & TRADER ORGANIZATIONS COMPLETED IN 5 COUNTRIES

The MISTOWA project recently completed a special-purpose survey and inventory of Producer Organizations (POs) and Trader Organizations (TOs) in Ghana, Benin, Nigeria, Burkina Faso and Senegal.

The purpose of the inventory was to:

- Identify and obtain information on the status and activities of existing producer/trader organizations.
- Make an inventory of current state of ICT hard and software, knowledge level and use by producers and traders
- Make an inventory of commercial activities including supply sources and trade destinations.
- Make an inventory of sources, types and use of market information.
- Make an inventory of training and other services received /required by the organizations.
- Identify areas of support to the POs & TOs so as to become effective partners in the generation and dissemination of information.

Two hundred and one POs and 174 TOs were surveyed in the five countries. The organizations had a total membership of 1,212,153 members. The survey provided useful contact information including the legal status, contact address with telephone numbers as well as contact details of current executive members.

The information has been organized into a “directory” and would be used to update the “contacts” page on the MISTOWA trade portal. The survey results show that currently 27% of the POs and 53% of the TOs surveyed in the five countries operate in markets outside their home country.

With regards to access to timely and accurate market information, only 31% of POs and 42% of TOs indicated they currently have access to accurate and timely market information.

The level of ICT use is low among the producers and traders, and only 2% to 8% of the members claim they have knowledge of ICT and can use the computer. Only 8% of the producer and trader organizations members currently receive market information through the existing national Market Information Systems as the majority receives it through informal ways including word of mouth.

The project will focus support to the POs and TOs in the areas of market access, ICT, trade capacity building and organizational management to equip them adequately to access information and increase intra-regional trade.

NEWSLETTER

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TABLES OF DATA COLLECTED

NB: the total number of members in the tables given below is not equal to the number of males and the number of females as may be expected. This is because some organizations only indicated total membership without separating them into number of males and females.

TO Membership Structure by country

Country	No. of Associations	No. of Members	No. of Males	No. of Females
Benin	20	18,168	4,400	3,691
Burkina Faso	21	31,502	11,006	20,496
Ghana	38	5,230	2,238	2,463
Nigeria	71	77,395	58,750	18,635
Senegal	24	207,225	89,666	117,559
Total	174	339,520	166,060	162,844

PO Membership Structure by country

Country	No. of Associations	No. of Members	No. of Males	No. of Females
Benin	20	369,357	266,455	89,722
Burkina Faso	25	9,060	5,949	2,695
Ghana	83	74,092	64,367	9,082
Nigeria	56	183,158	157,692	25,466
Senegal	17	236,966	143,841	93,125
Total	201	872,633	638,304	220,090

Areas in which training was received by POs and TOs

Areas in which training was received	Producer Organizations (%)	Trader Organizations (%)
Access to market information	17	19
Use of computers	5	5
Marketing	30	33
Lobbying	11	6
Organizational Management	39	29

Market information Sources

Source of market information	Producer Organizations (%)	Trader Organizations (%)
Radio	44	30
Television	14	7
Newspaper	12	10
SMS (text message)	16	33
Cyber café	2	3
Word of mouth	78	86
Private network	35	37
MIS	6	10
Association's regional networks	33	31

MORE ICT TRAINING NEEDED

The use of ICT in obtaining market information is paramount among MISTOWA's objectives. However lack of knowledge of ICT coupled with the low usage of computer by members of the various associations is an indication that more training by MISTOWA is required towards the achievement of this goal.

Word of mouth and traders' and producers' own private networks are the main sources of market information to these organizations. This serves as a great challenge to MISTOWA in achieving its objective of improving the West African trade environment by bringing these traders, producers, transporters and policy makers together through seminars, crop outlook conferences and trade fairs where trade contacts can be established. MISTOWA will facilitate and harmonize these informal sources of information and make it more formal and commercial to enhance intra-regional trade.

The survey also confirmed that **61% of producer organizations** and **49% of trader organizations** have had some training in the last two years where more than half of all trainings were organized by members of the associations themselves. MISTOWA will identify these organizations involved in self-training and build their capacity so they can be more effective in providing training services to their members.

Only 5% of trainings organized for the various associations was in the use of computers. In order to meet the standards required towards the use of ICT in accessing market information, MISTOWA is currently facilitating training programs in introduction to computer use and internet to members of the various trader/producer organizations so they can be more effective in providing and accessing accurate and timely market information using ICT.

Contact information of all producer organizations and trader organizations is currently being organized to be included in the website of West Africa Agricultural Trade Portal (www.wa-agritrade.net). This is expected to improve contacts and linkages between producers and marketers as part of the efforts in increasing trade in the West African subregion.

ORGANIZATIONAL MANAGEMENT AND MARKETING TRAINING STARTED



Kofi Debrah, COP interacting with some of the trainees at the ESCOM center, Dakar, Senegal. Fifty-five members of producer and trader associations were recently trained in organizational management in Kano and Lagos, Nigeria.

MARKET ENUMERATORS UNDERGO MARKET INFORMATION SYSTEM TRAINING

Ghana: *MISTOWA organized a five-day national training on market information system for selected market enumerators who report from the MISTOWA selected markets. Officers of six "e-commerce" (electronic commerce) and information centers established in some regions of the country also took part in the training.*

The training, which was held from 18th to 22nd July 2005 at the National Banking College in Accra, brought fifteen (15) participants from the various markets and centers together. Participants were introduced to data transmission, internet, and online data entry, data validation and approval, data mining and analysis.

As part of the training, field visits were organized for participants to collect prices on MISTOWA selected commodities from Nima and Agboghloshie markets in Accra. The price data was processed and transmitted online to the MISTOWA trade portal during the training. Participants were given hosting rights to upload prices directly to the MISTOWA trade portal from their various market centers via cyber cafes.

A follow up training for this core group is planned to keep the close contact and foster rapid data transmission from the various markets. Days after going back to their bases, some of the participants started using the online facility to transmit data to the MISTOWA project server.

Similar training to improve the capacities of market enumerators are planned for the coming months in the eight RESIMAO countries and in Nigeria.



Joel Dossoumon, MISTOWA Market Information Unit staff taking one of the participants through online data transmission.

LEADERS OF PRODUCER & TRADER ORGANIZATIONS RECEIVE HANDS-ON TRAINING IN COMPUTER & INTERNET USE

Senegal: ICONE Consulting, an experienced ICT training company, trained 30 leaders representing the national affiliates of ROPPA (producers organizations), ROESAO and FACIA (traders organizations). The training was spread over five days

and included initiation and hands-on experience WINDOWS, WORD, EXCEL and INTERNET. Twelve of the thirty were women leaders.

Benin: Mr. Yaovi Atohoun, an experienced ICT consultant, has trained a group of 50 producer and trader organizations members in Benin. The training took place in Cotonou at the Campus Numérique. According to Mr. Atohoun, the training is designed to break the myth around the computer use and give participants some notion and preliminary knowledge of the computer use. The participants surfed the MISTOWA trade portal as practical exercise.

Nigeria: The MISTOWA project is collaborating with the six modern and well-equipped Community Resource Centers in Abuja, Bauchi, Kaduna, Enugu, Abeokuta and Calabar to provide ICT training for selected leaders of producer and trader associations. Members of the Dawanau Market Development Association and traders from the Yankaba markets were on schedule to receive ICT training at the Kaduna CRC while those from the Lagos Mile 12 Market will receive theirs at the Abeokuta CRC.

Burkina Faso: EPAT Burkina Faso, an experienced training center, provided a 4-day intensive and hands-on training in Ouagadougou for 15 members of producer and trader associations. As with the other trainings, participants were exposed to WINDOWS, WORD, EXCEL and INTERNET and had practical experience in accessing information on the MISTOWA trade portal.

USE OF WEIGHING SCALES CATCHING ON WITH TRADERS IN KUMASI

Reports from the Kumasi central market indicates that traders are gradually acclimating to the use of standard weights and measures in selling their products daily. The monitoring exercise conducted with other collaborators revealed that, out of the 100 scales distributed, 76 were displayed and 72 were in active use.

In Nigeria, the Lagos Mile 12 Market Association is also promoting the use of weighing scales for the sale of grains and legumes.



A trader in Agboghloshie Market weighing his product on one of the scales supplied by MISTOWA for the pilot project.

MISTOWA / IFDC GHANA

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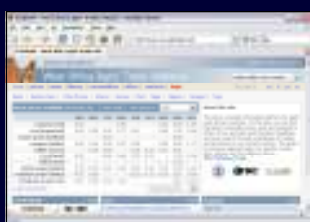
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STAFF NEWS**Staff Transfers****Kwame Wisdom Tenge**

is on transfer from IFDC-Africa Division, Lome Togo to Ghana to strengthen the MISTOWA team. He holds a Diploma in translation from the School of Translators, Ghana. Wisdom is responsible for the translation and proofreading of research findings and publications at IFDC, and will provide translation services to MISTOWA.



Contact: wtenge@ifdc.org

Mrs Fatimata Mohammed, Deputy Director in the Planning and Monitoring Department of the Kano State Agricultural and Rural Development Authority (KNARDA) was seconded to the MISTOWA project with effect from June 1, 2005.

She is operating out of the Kano office as the Coordinator of POS and TOs in Northern Nigeria. She will coordinate the implementation of the MISTOWA Monitoring and Evaluation Plan in Nigeria. Mrs Mohammed has a Diploma in Information Technology and a Masters Degree in Educational Administration and Planning from the Bayero University in Kano. She is also a holder of a Higher National Diploma in Home Economics from the Ahmadu Bello University in Zaria.

Mr Gafar Ajao has been seconded to MISTOWA by the Dawanau Market Development Association (DMDA) and will continue to provide ICT support to DMDA. He holds a diploma in Investigative Journalism, a Diploma in Computer Appreciation and IT System Analysis. Mr Gafar was recently the Project Manager of the Information Aid Network (IFAnet) where he managed producer/trader training on ICT use and applications at the ICT center in the Dawanau market.

Upcoming events

18 July to 10 September—a series of training sessions for market enumerators in the 8 RESIMAO countries plus Ghana (SRID) and Nigeria (NAMIS). Contact: rklutse@ifdc.org

1-5 August—Aburi, Ghana: Follow-up training for Market Enumerators and Officers of E-commerce Centres. Contact: mtaylor@ifdc.org

2-3 August—Cotonou, Bénin: Trade capacity training on procedures for imports and exports in the ECOWAS space. Contact: straore@ifdc.org

7-10 August—Ejisu, Ghana: Business training for new members of the Ghana Agricultural Input Dealers (GAIDA), WITC Center, Ejisu, Ashanti, Ghana. Contact: mtaylor@ifdc.org

8-11 August—Bobo-Dioulasso, Burkina Faso: Computer and Internet access training for producer and trader organizations. Contact: straore@ifdc.org

16 August—MISTOWA project launching at Banikoara, Northern Benin. Contact asoglo@ifdc.org

23-26 August—Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso: Annual work planning workshop of MISTOWA staff and partners at the Hotel Splendide, Ouagadougou; includes the Project Advisory Committee meeting on the 23rd at the IFDC office in Ouaga. Contact: kdebrah@ifdc.org

30-31 August—Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso: MISTOWA partners meeting (CNB-ROESAO, CPF, SONAGESS, CN-CRA, and other key persons.) Contact: straore@ifdc.org

6-7 Sept—Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso: Trade capacity training on procedures for imports and exports in the ECOWAS space. Contact: straore@ifdc.org

16-20 Sept—Accra, Ghana: Second Annual Crop Outlook Conference and Trade Opportunities, co-organized by MISTOWA and CILSS. Contact: ealognikou@ifdc.org

11-13 October—Nairobi, Kenya: First regional summit of Cereal Trade in Eastern and Southern Africa, co-organized by RATES, COMESA, ECA and USAID. Contact: www.tradeafrica.biz

24-26 October—Stellenbosch, SA: market access conference for agricultural products. by SA Agri Academy in collaboration with CBI, UNCTAD, NMAC, PPECB (S. Africa). Contact: reventer@netactive.co.za



If you wish to announce an event in this column,
please send us a message before the 25th of the month. to: info@mistowa.org