

**CONSULTATION MEETING ON THE ACBF-ILO-LMIS PROJECT**  
*“Improving labour market statistics and enhancing the management of labour  
market information systems”*  
Bamako, 6 to 7 August 2003

**Seminar report**

The consultation meeting of the ACBF-ILO-LMIS was held from 6 to 7 August 2003 in Hotel Salam, Bamako, on the theme “*Improving labour market statistics and enhancing the management of labour market information systems*”. The objective of the meeting was to revive project activities that had been suspended, more or less.

The agenda, which focused essentially on the examination of the project document forwarded to participants earlier, was as follows:

1. Self-introduction by participants and adoption of the draft work schedule;
2. Opening address;
3. Presentation of meeting and project objectives;
4. Discussions.

The list of participants is found in Annex 1 of this report.

**Item 1:**

In keeping with the agenda, participants took the floor in turns to introduce themselves. Unfortunately, Nigeria was represented by only one of the two delegates expected.

**Item 2:**

After welcoming all the delegates and calling the meeting to order, the Chairman gave a brief background of the project. He informed participants that the project, which had been approved in December 2001, had undergone a period of stagnation as a result of the recent political crisis in Cote d’Ivoire. This stagnation, he added, also stemmed from difficulties in maintaining regular and constant communication between the various parties.

**Item 3:**

According to the Chairman, the main objective of the meeting was to secure a broad-based consensus on conditions for implementing the provisions of the project document submitted to the participants. The overall objective of the project itself, he declared, was summed up in its title, namely: “*Improving labour market statistics and enhancing the management of labour market data*”. He also briefly redefined the specific objectives of the project (building the capacity of governments, social partners and local institutions to collect, process, analyse and disseminate labour market data and monitor poverty).

At this point, the Chairman carefully reviewed the main concerns to be examined, as featured on the meeting’s program. In a bid to enhance participants’ knowledge of the various country situations and match national needs to the country plans to be drafted, the Chairman suggested and participants agreed that the section entitled “Focus on national situation: Needs and ongoing activities” should be discussed the following day together with the section entitled “RPSC, ACBF and AFRISTAT meeting to discuss management issues and action plan”.

The Chairman underscored that although the project was certainly an initiative of the ILO and ACBF, it was essentially the responsibility of the countries concerned to draft the action plans and undertake the necessary organizational activities to ensure successful implementation. He concluded that the success of the project hinged on the willingness of countries to play the leading role.

Meanwhile, participants expressed the wish that the Chairman should make a brief presentation of the ACBF. Accordingly, some information was given on the mission the ACBF, the scope of activities

supported by the institution, its mode of intervention, its main resource mobilization procedures, the special conditions for obtaining its assistance, its project development methods in the various countries and lastly, the recent adaptation of its initial mandate so that it can address the needs of African states.

#### Item 4:

After discussions following the Chairman's presentation and reactions to certain issues treated in the project document, the meeting reached a certain number of conclusions.

The solutions proposed to some of the main concerns raised are summarized in Table 1 below:

**Table 1: Summary of concerns raised and solutions proposed**

Main concerns	Solutions proposed
• What is the nature of the problem with ILO that slowed down project activities?	• There is no problem with the ILO. The stagnation stems from the recent political crisis in Côte d'Ivoire as well as communication problems between headquarters and local ILO offices.
• Isn't there a risk that the ILO may no longer be involved in the implementation of project activities?	• It would be advisable not to expect the effective involvement of the ILO headquarters in the implementation of project activities. However, the national agencies will be able to work in very close collaboration with the experts in local ILO offices.
• In what proportions will the budget be shared among the various countries, considering that all the States involved in the project are at different levels of implementation?	• A decision on the process will be reached by consensus following a brainstorming session. The countries that have made the most progress may already start by presenting all the necessary documents, <i>although this will be advisable only after the RPU has been effectively set up.</i>
• What strategies ought to be implemented to make the project operational in the various countries?	• First of all, the operational action plans have to be defined by the countries themselves, since they better understand their own realities and the attendant needs and priorities. Next, the operationalization of the project has to take into consideration the constraints, resources to be mobilized and the mode of organization to be adopted to attain expected results. All of this is the responsibility of the national teams.
• Will evaluation of the initial budget proposed be adjusted at the time of effective project start-up?	• It is true that depreciation of the dollar since the initial budget evaluation will result in a decline in its real cost. However, for the requirements of this pilot phase, the evaluation that has been done should suffice, otherwise there would be need for budget adjustment.

Apart from the above concerns, the following issues were also discussed:

### 1. Setting up a Regional Project Steering Committee (CRPP/RPSC)

Discussions on this item started with the confirmation of government bodies (cf. Table 2).

**Table 2 : Summary of Government Bodies Selected**

Country	Representatives	Title of representative	Institution	Supervisory body
Cameroon	M. MOUTE à Bidias Camille	General Manager	National Employment Fund	Ministry of Employment, Labour and Social Insurance
Mali	M. Saliha DOUMBIA	Director	Employment and Training Observatory	Ministry of Labour and the Public Service
Nigeria	M. U. E. O. Anyanwu	Executive secretary	National Manpower Board	National Planning Commission
Uganda	M. Alphonse Ojja-Andira	Assistant	Labour Commission Employment	Department of Labour Employment and industrial relations
Zambia	M. Raphael PHIRI	Director, Planning	Planning and Research Unit	Ministry of Labour and social security

The Chairman recalled that although the setting up of these structures had to be validated by forwarding an official confirmation letter, this condition had been waived in order to speed up the process.

## **2. Consideration of the duties of CRPP/RPSC**

The duties entrusted to this structure were approved on the whole, subject to the following amendment: “it shall organize and coordinate program activities” in stead of “organize the program’s mid-term and final review”. Furthermore, participants expressed the wish that such evaluation be done by a structure located outside the Regional Project Steering Committee.

## **3. Management of the Chairmanship of CRPP/RPSC**

To reconcile the two extreme options of a single chairmanship for the duration of the project and a rotational chairmanship on a yearly basis, a middle solution was retained: *The Chairman shall be elected for a term of one year renewable, subject to performance deemed satisfactory by the majority of the members of the Regional Project Steering Committee.*

## **4. Periodicity of CRPP/RPSC meetings**

The Regional Project Steering Committee (CRPP/RPSC) shall meet twice a year, with the option of holding ad hoc sessions, if need be.

## **5. Special provisions governing the post of CRPP/RPSC Chairman**

- This position shall be purely honorary;
- The title of CRPP/RPSC chairman shall not be personal. It shall be attached to the position occupied by its beneficiary under conditions defined by project provisions;
- The Chairman shall be elected from among CRPP/RPSC members.

## **6. Definition of CRPP/RPSC management regulations and terms of reference.**

The Regional Secretariat of the project will draft these provisions as soon as it is set up. This will be followed by the recruitment of a project coordinator in accordance with the procedures in force, as outlined below.

Since participants wished to have an idea of the project coordinator’s profile, the following general requirements were proposed:

### **Profile of coordinator:**

- be African;
- be perfectly bilingual;
- be less than 50 years old;
- have a solid basis in statistical analysis;
- have at least 10 years professional experience, with 5 of them in the project’s domain;
- be computer literate;
- be ready to travel frequently;
- be able to work in a team ;
- have a wide experience in project management;
- etc.

This was followed by discussions on remuneration rates. The consensus was that the remuneration proposed in the initial project document was relatively low. It was decided that an adjustment be made in order to attract highly competent candidates.

With regard to the recruitment of the regional coordinator, participants expressed the wish that the procedures be clearly explained. This gave rise to the procedure outlined below which details the actions to be undertaken, responsibilities and deadlines.

## Recruitment procedure for the Regional Coordinator

- *Drafting of the terms of reference:* AFRISTAT was entrusted with this task;
- *Deadline: The first draft has to be forwarded by 22 August 2003 latest* - that is two weeks after the current meeting;
- *Deadline for feedback from States involved in the project:* The national structures involved in the project shall have **one week to study the draft and send their comments by mail; the deadline for such feedback is 29 August 2003;**
- *Vacancy announcement: This procedure shall be launched from 15 September 2003.* The vacancy will be announced in the following periodicals: J. A. L'intelligent (French) and The economist (English).
- *Validity of vacancy announcement:* The vacancy notice will be published for one month, meaning that **the deadline for submission of applications will be 13 October 2003;**
- *Selection of candidates:* The procedure will be as follows:

### Stage 1: Short-listing of candidates

- AFRISTAT shall receive all the applications and study them;
- On the basis of the information provided by the candidates, AFRISTAT shall draft an opinion report and a shortlist of the three best candidates, accompanied by their CVs. The list shall be forwarded to the Regional Project Steering Committee for comment. This activity should take at most two weeks, such that **the file is submitted to the Steering Committee by the first week of November, latest;**

### Stage 2 : Examination of short-listed application files and selection of the candidate

This stage, which will be conducted at the level of the Steering Committee, could eventually be followed by the organisation of an interview. At the end of this stage, the Steering Committee may select the Regional Coordinator.

- *Designation of national coordinators:* This is the responsibility of each country. However the name of the person selected has to be communicated immediately after appointment of the Regional Coordinator so that the first teamwork can start. The Chairman expressed the wish that National Project Committees be light structures so that their activities can be implemented smoothly.
- *Selection of the national project coordinator:* The national coordinator should not be a new recruit, but rather the head of a national structure (preferably) that is already in operation.
- *Forwarding of country action plans:* Country action plans have to be drafted by the countries themselves and forwarded to AFRISTAT/Regional Project Coordinator **by the end of September 2003 latest.**
- *Harmonisation of the presentation of action plans:* Participants expressed the wish that AFRISTAT should examine the possibility of harmonising the presentation of the action plans. This concern will be addressed after the countries have forwarded their respective action plans.

## 7. Election of the CRPP/RPSC Chairman

A select committee (excluding observers) unanimously designated the Cameroonian representative, Mr. MOUTE Camille, as the first Chairman of the Regional Project Steering Committee. Later on, this appointment was ratified in plenary.

## **8. Secretariat/Regional Unit of the project (URP/RPU)**

AFRISTAT, with the backing of the ACBF, was designated to ensure the daily management of the project. However, participants requested for a presentation of the institution and wished to know about its experience in relation to project objectives. Mr. Martin BALEPA, the Deputy General Manager of AFRISTAT, presented the institution, and seized the opportunity to give each delegation a bilingual copy of PROSMIC,.

A memorandum of understanding should formalize this collaboration. That document shall be drafted by the Steering Committee.

The agenda having been exhausted, the Chairman thanked all participants for the quality of work done within such a short time. He then gave the floor to the Chairman of the Steering Committee who adjourned the meeting after extending thanks to participants and expressing the hope that the project succeeds.

**Rapporteur**

**Siriki Zanga COULIBALY**

## Annex 1 : List of participants

Full name	Title	Institution	Address
NOUMOU Coffi	Program officer ACBF	ACBF	E-mail: <a href="mailto:c.noumou@acbf.pack.org">c.noumou@acbf.pack.org</a> Tel:
Martin BALEPA	DGA	AFRISTAT (Mali)	E-mail: <a href="mailto:martin.balepa@afristat.org">martin.balepa@afristat.org</a> Tel (223) 221-55-00
Siriki Zanga COULIBALY	Poverty Expert	AFRISTAT (Mali)	E-mail: <a href="mailto:siriki.coulibaly@afristat.org">siriki.coulibaly@afristat.org</a> Tel: (223) 221 55 00
Camille MOUTE à BIDIAS	General Manager	National Employment Fund (Cameroon)	E-mail: <a href="mailto:fne@gcnet.cm">fne@gcnet.cm</a> BP : 10079 Yaoundé (Cameroon) Tel : (237) 222 51 81 Fax : (237) 223 53 39
Pierre TEKAPSSO	Research Officer	National Employment Fund (Cameroon)	E-mail: <a href="mailto:fne@gcnet.cm">fne@gcnet.cm</a> / <a href="mailto:ptkpsso@hotmail.com">ptkpsso@hotmail.com</a> BP : 10079 Yaoundé (Cameroon) Tel : (237) 222 51 81 Fax : (233) 223 53 39
Owen MGEMEZULU	Principal planner	Minister of labour and social security Zambia (Zambia)	E-mail : <a href="mailto:owen@zamnet.zm">owen@zamnet.zm</a> New GOVT.COMPLEX Box : 32186, Lusaka Tel : (260)-1-225722 Fax : (260)-1-235190
Dr Buleti Nsemukila	Director	Central Statistical Office Zambia (Zambia)	E-mail: <a href="mailto:bnsemukila@zamstats.gov.zm">bnsemukila@zamstats.gov.zm</a> Tel : (260)-1-253468
Abraham J. Bwire	Principal Labour Officer	Ministry of gender labour and social development Uganda (Uganda)	E-mail : <a href="mailto:ps-mglstd@africaonline.co.ug">ps-mglstd@africaonline.co.ug</a> Tel : (256) 41 347854/5 Fax : (256) 41 256374
Helen Namirembe Nviiri	Principal statistician, Labour Statistics	Uganda bureau of statistics (Uganda)	E-mail: <a href="mailto:unhs@infocom.co.ug">unhs@infocom.co.ug</a> P.O Box 13 ENTEBE Tel : (256)-41-322099/100 Fax : (256)-41-320147
U.E.O ANYANWU	Man power planning and development Executive secretary	National manpower board (Nigeria)	E-mail : Plot 152 RAB DIKKOST. Tel : 09-3142969 09-3142975 080-44109148 080-35534266
Saliha DOUMBIA	Director	Employment and Training Observatory (Mali)	E-mail : <a href="mailto:of@datatech.toolnet.org">of@datatech.toolnet.org</a> BP : 221- Bamako Tel : (223) 223-59-50 FAX : (223) 223-59-45
Ishaga COULIBALY	Head of the Population Division	National Department of Statistics and Data Processing (Mali)	E-mail : Tel : (223) 221-52-85 Cel :(223) 641-60-94 Fax : (223) 222-71-45