

**AGADIR ACTIVITY MANAGEMENT SERVICES  
PROGRESS REPORT #6**

**SECOND QUARTER 2002**

**Prepared for:  
USAID/Morocco**

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**Submitted by:  
Chemonics International Inc.**

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## **BACKGROUND**

Technical assistance for implementation of the Agadir Activity Management Services is provided by Chemonics International Inc. under a Task Order, with a total estimated budget of \$1,983,649. The objective of the Task Order under the GBTI IQC PCE-98-000-15-00 is to strengthen the institutional effectiveness of two key industry associations (APEFEL and GRIT) of the Souss-Massa-Draa Region and to develop Total Quality Management at the Commercial Court of Agadir. The two key associations are to be used as intermediaries to deliver business support services to small and medium enterprises in the region. The overall goal of the activity is to improve the competitiveness of Moroccan products in world markets by rising of professional standards and lowering costs for all of the associations' members. Chemonics International also has the mandate to provide technical assistance, training and commodities needed for the Commercial Court of Agadir to increase its efficiency and effectiveness.

### **SECTION 1: CLIN 1 - ADMINISTRATION AND MANAGEMENT**

On April 22<sup>nd</sup>, we met with Richard Dreiman in Rabat to discuss the planning of activities that remain to be completed in the Agadir Activity Management Services Task Order. The following day we met with USAID to discuss the current state of implementation and to request a no-cost contract extension until September 30<sup>th</sup>, 2002. This was accepted by USAID. The extension of our contract will allow us to complete the professional training of judges without requiring their availability on weekends. Considering the demands of the training program, in addition to their official duties, they are understandably reluctant to make this commitment. This extension is also needed to complete the implementation of a management system for the archives of the court.

We took part in the Partners Meeting organized by USAID in Rabat on May 28<sup>th</sup>, 2002. The meeting was an opportunity to meet and have discussions with other USAID project teams. We took advantage of the meeting to discuss the issue of performance indicators. We copied the documents on indicators that are available at USAID and agreed to discuss the next data collection with USAID in early July. In order to proceed efficiently with the final data collection when he returns from vacation in September, our consultant Omar Anbarre needs to plan his work ahead of time. After meeting with USAID, we will hold working sessions with him and all three partners GRIT, APEFEL and the Commercial Court, to plan for this activity.

### **SECTION 2: CLIN 2 - THE PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATIONS**

Work with the GRIT and APEFEL has been progressing very well. Both associations began the last training program they requested. This is mostly a few hours of training on software such as Power Point. Both associations are also heavily involved in the development of their web sites, their last activities being implemented through Chemonics.

## **APEFEL**

The Trade Symposium organized by APEFEL on April 26-27 kept the association very busy for the whole month of April. APEFEL has been very active this year as a lobby group. It took part in a major agricultural fair held in Casablanca and, as observer, attends the negotiation meetings on the agricultural trade agreement between the European Union and Morocco.

The Symposium was therefore a very important event for them. It was held at Hotel Anezi in Agadir under the banner "Commerce des Fruits et Légumes Marocains à l'Aube de 2010". The Minister of Agriculture and the Secretary General of the Ministry of Industry and Commerce opened the event. USAID Director Jim Bednar represented the Agency. Five hundred participants attended and stayed both days. One guest speaker, Mr. Tessier from Quebec (who trained one of the APEFEL employees during the OST in October 2001) spoke on the North American market for fruits and vegetables and how it is structured.

APEFEL also organized a second two-day workshop on fertigation. It followed a first workshop offered on February 27-28 that was facilitated by Mr. Le Quillec of France. This time the trainers were Moroccan nationals. It was well attended with twice the number of participants expected. The positive evaluation made by the participants who attended the first seminar provided for the best word-of-mouth publicity. Producers have not mastered fertigation and they specifically requested this training. This second workshop was held on May 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> and a total of 36 participants registered and each paid 1000 dhs to attend.

A training workshop on the World Trade Organization and EU agricultural trade negotiations was held on June 27-28 in Agadir. The trainers Najib Akesbi and Amal Britel are among Morocco's key negotiators. Ms. Amal represents Morocco at the WTO and Mr. Akesbi is advisor in the negotiations with the European Union. The training went well although attended by 18 participants only. Several participants who had pre-registered had to attend a last minute meeting on citrus, and had to cancel their participation in the seminar.

A call for proposals was also issued to recruit a supplier to develop APEFEL's web site. LNET of Casablanca was selected. A two-day meeting was held on June 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup>, with APEFEL, Chemonics and LNET to determine specific elements of the content for the association's web site. The group met again two weeks later to discuss the proposed site architecture. Both meetings were highly productive and work is progressing quickly.

## **GRIT**

This quarter we welcomed James MacGregor, a tourism specialist, in Agadir April 7-18. The mission focused on the e-marketing strategy, preliminary analysis of the data collected in the Exit Survey (clientele profile), and the GRIT web site.

Mr. MacGregor's time was divided between intensive working sessions during the day and working dinners at night. He had dinner with the Communauté Urbaine d'Agadir to discuss the urban landscape and development of a resort town. He also dined with the heads of various professional corporations and lastly, with the travel agents based in Agadir.

We took advantage of his mission to organize a meeting to inform GRIT members of the progress made with the USAID-GRIT agreement. The meeting was held at the Wilaya on April 10, one year after the Focus Group day organized on April 10, 2001. The Wali, OMNT, RAM, Ministry of Tourism, USAID and the members of the Directoire took part in the session.

The focal point of the meeting was the presentation made by Saad Berrechid of B-Marketing on the first 2000 visitors interviewed in the Exit Survey. Results showed a higher level of satisfaction than expected, a rate of return that is appreciable, and a demand for more diversified and eco-touristic products. The presentation generated much interest. For the first time, tourism operators have access to data specific to visitors to Agadir. The survey ended in May and the report will be available the last week of July. B Marketing will prepare a detailed analysis report on all the data and seven (7) individual reports that will present the data, by market.

To assist ARGAZE in the development of its web site, GRIT set up a web site committee comprising representatives of the industry and Chemonics. Work has been very intensive and demanding. A two-day session was held in presence of James MacGregor and GRIT's president on April 12-13. It was the opportunity to lay down the architecture of the site in accordance to the e-marketing strategy elaborated by Mr. MacGregor. Preparing for the meeting, ARGAZE had worked with Chemonics and Mr. MacGregor through conference calls and electronic messages to develop a draft 95 page "Cahier de charges" that was revised on April 12-13. One month later, in the first week of May, ARGAZE came back to Agadir for 4 days to present its final "Cahier de charges" and to explain what information was needed and when.

Progress on the web site has been positive, even if ARGAZE work was sometimes slowed down by unexpected problems for which it had to come up with very creative solutions. One of these is the sensitive issue of statistics that are provided by hotel owners to the delegation. Tourism operators complained that miscalculations frequently happened and data were unreliable. They also hoped that monthly statistics could be published at an earlier date in the month after they were collected.

As we explained in a recent weekly report, classified hotels (about 100) are required by law to fill out a long questionnaire each month on the number of tourists that stay at their hotel everyday and their nationality. This information is then communicated and aggregated by the Ministry of Tourism, which then publishes it. To solve the problem ARGAZE developed a database that will be installed at both GRIT and the Regional Delegation of Tourism. Starting in October, about 70 hotels (that have Internet) will use a spreadsheet into which they will enter their data. They will then print and stamp the form for official transmission to the Ministry, and send the information by e-mail or on a floppy disk to the Delegation. The electronic file will be transferred into the database and all the calculations made automatically, and shared with GRIT.

If the Ministry wishes to do so, it could easily make the database and electronic forms available to all the delegations throughout the countries. It could also make the final compilation and production of statistics at the Ministry much easier, more reliable and faster.

GRIT took advantage of ARGAZE's presence in Agadir to interview the candidates short-listed for the position of Webmaster. Before he left, Mr. MacGregor met with USAID Rabat to provide a debrief on his mission.

We also organized the participation of a regional delegation to the World Eco-tourism Summit held in Quebec City, on May 19-22. The participants had to provide for their own transportation to the Summit. GRIT negotiated with RAM a reduction of 75% on the airfare. The Region paid for the remaining amount. Mr. Achengli, GRIT vice-president, was extremely helpful in the organization of the mission. He contacted the President of the Region to secure his contribution and organized a meeting with him. He also met with all the participants to discuss the importance of the Summit given the current tourism crisis.

The participants were:

- Mr. B. Moudoud, Regional Tourism Representative in Agadir
- Mr. Hakim Sabri, Owner of the Auberge-Restaurant Zolado Immouzer
- Mr. R. Mohamed, Director, Parc National du Souss
- Dr. A Brrou, President of the Commune of Mesti (province of Tiznit)
- Ms. Z. Zahir, Chief of Project – Tourism at the Chamber of Commerce of Agadir
- Mr. L. Iguider, President of the Commune of Sidi Bibi (province of Chtouka Aït Baha)
- Mr. L. Zakri, GRIT

We felt it was important to involve the president of the commune of Sidi Bibi, Mr. Iguider, since it is the commune that comprises most of the communities living in the Park. As for the president of the Mesti commune, Dr. Brrou, he is a strong advocate of eco-tourism development in the province of Tiznit. The director of the park, Mr. Ribí, seemed an obvious choice as well as the Regional Tourism Delegate in Agadir. Ms. Zineb from the Chamber of Commerce was the key person working with GRIT for tourism development in the province of Tiznit (city of Tiznit and Sidi Ifni). Lastly, we thought it could be interesting to have a young investor such as Mr. Sabri, whom USAID met in Immouzer when preparing for the Ambassador's visit. We also included Mr. Zakri as representative from GRIT. Mr. Zakri extended his stay in Quebec and visited for three days with James MacGregor in Chelsea, Quebec. Mr. MacGregor organized a visit to the Canadian Tourism Commission where Mr. Zakri could buy relevant publications and meet with various tourism experts.

Asmaa Oubou of Chemonics accompanied the delegation Richard Dreiman of Chemonics Washington and James MacGregor (participation not paid by the project in either case) met and accompanied the participants in Quebec City.

The participants were very pleased with the Summit. They were astonished by how important an industry ecotourism can be, as evidenced by countries such as Peru and Costa Rica. They realized that Agadir had to act promptly and that much needs to be done to develop world-class activities in the backcountry. Co-sponsored by UNEP, the Summit focused on sustainable tourism development, with sustainability used in terms of both environmental and economic sustainability for rural populations

and cultures. The theme and approach were highly relevant to the participants' concerns and interest. The participants produced a report that was sent to USAID.

Following the discussion it had with the Ministry of Tourism representative, who also attended the Summit, the delegation would be happy to contribute to the organization of an Ecotourism Symposium in Morocco. The participants hope that such an event can be organized towards the end of 2002, before the end of the Year of Ecotourism.

At the end of May, we received the proposals from three (3) firms interested in developing the content for the GRIT web site. Chemonics and GRIT selected MEDIA5 of Casablanca. Since then MEDIA5 met with GRIT and ARGAZE and is working on the production of textual and visual content for the web site.

Lastly, Mr. MacGregor was asked by the World Tourism Organization to write up a case study on the Agadir Tourism Initiative for their new report. GRIT and Agadir will no doubt benefit from the promotion that will result and GRIT is pleased to collaborate with Mr. MacGregor in developing the document.

### **SECTION 3: CLIN 3 - THE COMMERCIAL COURT OF AGADIR**

The second quarter of 2002 began with the judges OST to North America. The participants left on April 13 and returned on April 25. The following participants were selected by the Ministry of Justice:

- Ms. N. RAHALI Chief of project, Ministry of Justice, Rabat
- Ms. F. SEFFAR, Commercial Court of Appeal of Marrakech
- Mr. M. AIT BELHOUCINE, President of the Commercial Court of Marrakech
- Mr. A. BARJANI, Vice-President of the Commercial Court of Marrakech
- Mr. E. SAADAoui, Vice-President of the Commercial Court of Marrakech
- Mr. L. BELKHENFAR, President of the Commercial Court of Agadir
- Mr. L. KHALIFA, Attorney at the Commercial Court of Agadir
- Mr. M. AMERGUY, Vice-President of the Commercial Court of Agadir

The group was accompanied by Naoufel BENBRAHIM of Chemonics' field office in Agadir.

The mission took the participants to 12 different North American judiciary institutions (Courts, Law School, Chancellery) and involved over 13 judges. The participants were very satisfied with the mission. In the evaluation forms they completed, all participants declared that elements they found the most interesting were innovative practices used in North America in the settlement of commercial cases (such as mediation/conciliation and arbitration), the continued training of the judges, the role of justice in cases of bankruptcy, and on-line services to the clients. The participants also appreciated the opportunity provided to them to see courts that are fully automated.

The professional training of the judges provided by Cabinet Bahnini proceeded as planned. The seminars will come to a halt on July 15 and resume on September 1<sup>st</sup>.

The judges are very satisfied with the trainers provided by Cabinet Maître Bahnini and frequently express their appreciation and satisfaction with the quality of the training provided.

Following the Ministry's decision not to adopt the electronic solution recommended by our consultant Tarik Fdil for the Commercial Court's archives, we were instructed in late April to contact the Center for Archives of Rabat-Salé and to discuss with its Director, Mr. Abdelmoumni, the option the Ministry hoped we would implement in Agadir. We met with Mr. Abdelmoumni, who came to Agadir on May 2<sup>nd</sup>. He worked with us on the TOR for the archives, and outlined the filing system approach that he wants all the commercial courts to adopt. He also identified for us the type of filing equipment that the Ministry will be acquiring for other courts, so that we can purchase the same or its equivalent. Following his visit, we issued a call for proposals from companies that specialize in providing these types of services and equipment.

We spent Saturday, May 18<sup>th</sup>, the Court to meet with potential suppliers interested in developing the archive system and/or providing the equipment required by the Commercial Court of Agadir. Mr. Abdelmoumni was with us to answer all the questions regarding the system to be developed and implemented.

Before we could proceed, unexpected technical issues had to be solved. The first problem that confronted us related to the weight of the equipment and documents to be stored on the second floor of the building. We called upon an expert in construction who advised us not to install the archives on the second floor, explaining that the structure of the building would not withstand the weight of the equipment. The decision was then taken by the Court to move various offices to the second floor in order to free some space on the ground floor where the archives could be installed. The supplier is currently re-designing the new layout for the equipment. Based on these plans, the expert on construction will then provide us with a written opinion on the feasibility of the project. We asked the Ministry of Justice to contact the owner of the building to request his authorization to modify the ground floor layout. We informed the Ministry that no order would be placed and money committed before such authorization is granted and the expert opinion provided in writing.

The firm selected to develop a computer assisted management system is ready to proceed. We negotiated its contract and had it approved by the regional Contract Officer. It will not be signed, however, until all required authorizations from construction experts and the landlord are obtained, and the Chemonics contract amended.

Lastly, the amount estimated for the archives had to be revised in the light of more definite cost information (quotes for equipment and proposals for the system). Instead of the \$50 000 estimated, total cost will be \$63 000 (fully burdened).

The Ministry of Justice and President of the Commercial Court also requested that Chemonics provide training to the clerks of the Court. Most clerks are young and have no judiciary or legal training, and it was felt that their lack of theoretical knowledge of legal procedures impacted their efficiency. We worked with the judges of Agadir to identify the content of the training and to structure it. The preliminary

modules were then revised by the Human Resource Department of the Ministry of Justice, as requested by Mr. Ghazali. The Ministry of Justice and the judges of Agadir identified the Chief Clerk of the Commercial Court of Appeals of Casablanca, Mr. Kawkab, as the most competent trainer. We contacted Mr. Kawkab and met with him in Casablanca to discuss the modules and potential collaboration. Mr. Kawkab is very knowledgeable and has previously trained chief clerks of several commercial courts. He agreed to collaborate with us on the training of the clerks.

The first modules were offered on June 28-30. On July 1-3, Mr. Amerguy, the judge in charge of the Registry of Commerce who previously worked as chief clerk, will give the modules on the procedures linked to the registry of commerce. Mr. Kawkab will be back in Agadir from July 8<sup>th</sup> to the 14<sup>th</sup> to complete the training.

## **CONCLUSION**

The Chemonics team in Agadir is very satisfied with progress made in this 6th Quarter of the task order. The extra time provided by USAID (no-cost-contract-extension) will allow us to complete all our activities in a satisfactory manner.