

## Voices from the field



Real time market information for a fairer trade

Issa Bagayoko is a mango exporter from Mali. During the high season, between March and July, mangos are picked, gathered and transported to Bamako on day one. By 5:00 pm on day two, they have to be ready to ship. « I export the fruits by airfreight. There is no room for delays on that supply chain, because if you are late, you miss the plane! ».

## SMS to make SMEs more competitive!

Contacts are made throughout this process with the buyers in Europe. When the discussion comes to prices, however, Issa cannot argue with his business partners. « Before Trade at Hand, we didn't know the wholesale prices in Europe – so whatever the buyer told us, we just had to believe him ».

When the International Trade Centre, with the financial support of CBI and seco, launched Trade at Hand in November 2006, Issa and his peers throughout Mali and Burkina Faso started receiving real-time price information by SMS. Every single working day during the harvest, Issa can find out the prices his products, and those of his competitors, are making on target markets.

« When I went to Paris to meet with our importer the other day, he offered to fax me the wholesale prices from time to time » recalls Issa « I told him: Don't worry, I am getting them every day by SMS! »

For more information please contact: [semine@intracen.org](mailto:semine@intracen.org)