

GLOBAL ALLIANCE FOR CULTURAL DIVERSITY

Promoting West African Music in Regional and International Markets

Background	Many studies recognize the potential of the music sector in West Africa as a development factor and a source of export. However, this potential is often hindered by inadequate structuring of the sector and a limited knowledge of international economic patterns.
Objective	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Strengthen the African Music Export Office (BEMA) –a first of its kind ▪ Build capacities of local professionals of the music sector ▪ Foster the emergence of viable local markets and exchanges at the regional level ▪ Facilitate access to international markets
Partners	<p>This project is a best practice of partnering on different levels.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Regional: BEMA is a regional partnership in itself between private and civil society music operators from 4 West African countries: Mass Production (Guinea), Association des Artistes pour le Progrès (Benin), Umane Culture (Burkina Faso) and Africa Fête (Senegal). It encourages the export of West African music by enriching a network of reliable professional and providing advice. ▪ Local: BEMA plans and executes activities in cooperation with partners from the public private and civil society sectors (governments, management offices, artists, medias), as well as international counterparts with specific expertise (WOMEX, Zone Franche). ▪ International: A steering committee coordinates the activities of major donors and cooperation partners (GACD, OIF, French Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Diversités, SACEM).
Beneficiaries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The founding members of BEMA ▪ Cultural operators in the music industries in Benin, Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, Guinea and Senegal (musicians, labels, festivals, tour organizers, producers, etc.)
Duration	Long-term project launched in 2008
Lines of Action	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <u>Strengthening an innovative regional structure, the BEMA:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Launch of an Internet platform which includes a database of the main operators. - Clarification of BEMA's missions and developing its communication strategy. ▪ <u>Professionalising operators in accessing the market:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Training 60 West African producers in artist management and marketing skills. - Facilitating the participation of ten producers in the 2008 and five in the 2010 editions of WOMEX, the world's leading world music fair. All received personalized assistance to readjust their business strategies and take full advantage opportunities offered by the fair. ▪ <u>Improving the visibility of African productions on the international scene:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The conference "BEMA: A New Tool for African Artists", which was presented at WOMEX, attracted over 150 international professionals. - A music CD produced by BEMA in Africa has been widely circulated. - <i>Les Amazones of Guinea</i> were selected by WOMEX, from over 200 applications, to launch their new album and European tour with a major concert. ▪ <u>Strengthening local music markets</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Hosting national music exhibitions in four countries of the sub-region with booths, professional meetings, concerts and award ceremonies. ▪ <u>Exchanging experiences</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Organising a coordination meeting with all music export offices and national promotion agencies which were present at the WOMEX. - Preparing a Pan-African mobile music fair that encourages tour organisers to meet African talents on their own continent, ensuring a return on investment that really benefits the region
Links with culture and development	<p>This project helps the long-term development of the music sector by supporting the existing structure of BEMA and encouraging ownership and sustainability.</p> <p>It reinforces the potential of music as a productive sector and a factor of sustainable development through the professionalisation of the industry's operators, strengthening its local markets and promoting the circulation and visibility of artists and their products.</p>