

**In Mozambique, Market Information publishes its 500th Weekly Bulletin,
a Cause for Celebration**



*Chico Monteiro with SIMA colleague Simão Nhane and Zambian colleagues at Xiquelene Market in Maputo.
Photo taken by C. Donovan/MSU, June 8, 2004*

Chico Monteiro (on the left above) is known as Mr. Quente Quente in the markets of Maputo. For the past 14 years, he has been collecting price and supply information for the national Agricultural Market Information System, known as SIMA in Portuguese. This year, on February 4th, Chico and the rest of the SIMA team celebrated the publication of their 500th consecutive weekly edition of Quente Quente (Portuguese for “Hot Hot” as in “hot off the presses”). SIMA analysts also produce policy and market update briefs, known as the “Flash” series, that provide policy makers with recommendations on improving markets, as with the recent [Flash #45](#).

SIMA has innovated and increased its diffusion methods to reach an ever-increasing number of people. Over 300 names appear on the email distribution list, including farmer organizations and the largest traders in the country. Over 100 copies are distributed each week in paper form, with another unknown quantity reproduced and distributed in the provinces. The Ministry of Commerce regularly uses the information in their bulletins. Both the national radio and television news have contracted SIMA to provide input to weekly market programming. To reach the rural sectors, radio broadcasts, both local and national, have been able to reach at least 1.1 million rural households, according to the TIA 2002 survey. In a recent round table radio discussion, one announcer indicated that he tried to test a trader’s knowledge on prices in the market by offering to buy a product at a low price, and the trader rejected the deal, stating that he knew from the radio that the market prices were higher.

From a small component of a USAID project with Michigan State University, SIMA is now fully funded by the Ministry of Agriculture, a clear sign that the government values the team’s work. With decentralization, SIMA staff are now innovating the system, developing provincial level SIMA that can respond to local issues and needs, that much closer to the producers and traders. **The long term commitment of USAID enabled the development of human resources within SIMA which was critical to establishing one of the best market information systems in southern Africa.** With high growth and increasing producer participation in the markets, SIMA and its local SIMA will continue to provide the information needed for farmers and traders to compete in the markets.