

Nigeria hosts the 15th and last national seminar of UNESCO's project on the challenges of regional integration in West Africa

UNESCO and the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) are organizing a seminar from 26 to 28 February 2008 in Lagos (**Nigeria**) on the subject of "Nation-states and the challenges of regional integration in West Africa: the Nigerian case".

The opening ceremony will be chaired by Pierre Sané, UNESCO Assistant Director-General for Social and Human Sciences, in the presence of representatives from the project's different partners, who have implemented it over the past three years within the framework of UNESCO's Management of Social Transformations programme: West African Economic and Monetary Union, African Union, OECD, ECOBANK, the United Nations University and Trust Africa.

Building upon the participation of all the scientific coordinators of the 15 ECOWAS Member States, where similar meetings had already taken place, this seminar will explore the specificity of **Nigeria** where ECOWAS' Headquarters are located, to reflect collectively on the challenges and potential of this country's integration into the area of regional cooperation created in 1975.

Following meetings held in **Benin, Burkina Faso, Cape Verde, Ivory Coast, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea Bissau, Liberia, Mali, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone and Togo**, the 15th meeting will mark the end of a series of seminars launched in 2005. Each meeting will have led to the publication of a book by the *Karthala* Publishing Company.

Covering all 15 ECOWAS Member States, the project has provided an opportunity to initiate, in each of them - and often for the first time - a dialogue between researchers, political stake-holders and actors of economic and social development in order to understand the reasons behind the slow progress of an integration process, which is essential to lift West African countries out of their 'maldevelopment'.

One of the major outcomes of the initiative was the unanimous adoption by the ECOWAS Heads of State Summit in January 2008 of the project proposal for the creation of a West Africa Institute which should be established in Praia (**Cape Verde**). In charge of conducting research on regional integration in West Africa, the aim of the institute is to increase knowledge on the subject and to propose political options in favour of development, peace and human rights in the region.

The Project's Steering Committee will hold its first meeting immediately after the national seminar of Nigeria on 29 February in Lagos (**Nigeria**).

- [Provisional agenda](#) (PDF, also available in [French](#))
- [Provisional list of participants](#) (PDF in French)

- [Report of the first seminar of the MOST Project in West Africa](#), Dakar, Senegal, 20-22 March 2006 (PDF in French)
- [Final Report of the first seminar of the MOST Project in Cape Verde](#), Praia, Cape Verde, 4-5 April 2007 (PDF in French and Portuguese)

For more information on this event or to contact with the scientific coordinators in the ECOWAS countries, please see below:

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Quick link to the UNESCO-SHS webpage on the event:

www.unesco.org/shs/most/regional_integration/nigeria