

SUMMARY OF POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

REGIONAL WORKSHOP

LAND DEGRADATION, CLIMATE CHANGE AND MIGRATION IN WEST AFRICA

POLITICAL IMPLICATIONS TO STRENGTHEN RESILIENCE
AND PREVENT SECURITY PROBLEMS

18-19 May 2016 – Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso

I. Introduction

The regional workshop “Land Degradation, climate change and migration in West Africa: Political implications to strengthen resilience and prevent security problems” was financed by the Italian Development Cooperation (IDC) and the Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung (KAS) and organised by the Global Mechanism of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD), the International Organisation for Migration (IOM), the Italian Development Cooperation and KAS, with the institutional support of the government of Burkina Faso and the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS).

The main objective of the workshop was to identify strategies to tackle the challenges posed by the link between climate change, desertification, land degradation and drought (DLDD), and migration at the national and regional level, as well as to highlight and analyse the implications for policies to strengthen resilience and tackle the security challenges in front of us. The workshop facilitated exchanges and discussions between the representatives of the governments of Burkina Faso, Niger and Senegal, high level delegates of ECOWAS, experts (academic researchers, NATO, the civil society) and international partners (EU) on the following topics:

1. Analyse the inter-relations between DLDD, climate change and migration in West Africa;
2. Study the impact of mobility to enhance resilience, availability, access to resources, institutional networks and social capital on the region’s demographics;
3. Discuss innovative sources of potential financing and mechanisms to promote sustainable land management in areas subject to migration;
4. Acquire a better knowledge of good practices and the prospects of improved participation by migrants and the diaspora in land rehabilitation and climate change initiatives;
5. Prepare the way to draw up regional and national policies that deal globally with the profound causes of migration driven by DLDD, and aim to promote opportunities for people moving in the region;
6. Discuss the procedures for strengthening regional and international cooperation to control new migration trends and to prevent security problems;
7. Identify the ways and means of intensifying the dialogue between ECOWAS, its member states and its international partners, in particular the European Union (EU), on DLDD, climate change and migration.
8. Assess the opportunities and procedures for a better contribution by international partners such as the EU and the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) to greater stability in the region, in particular by strengthening technical and material capacities.

II. Opening, addresses and recapitulation of the different sessions

The workshop was launched on 18 May 2016 with an opening ceremony presided by **Her Excellency Mrs Laure Zongo Hien**, Minister for Women, National Solidarity and the Family of Burkina Faso. Three speakers addressed the workshop: **Mr Gennaro Gentile**, Director of the Office of the Italian Cooperation in Burkina Faso; **Mr Jean Lamy**, Ambassador and Head of the Delegation of the European Union in Burkina Faso, and finally **Mrs Metsi Markheta**, Resident Coordinator of the United Nations System in Burkina Faso. All three speakers focused on the situation of the advanced degradation of natural resources of the continent that has led to migrations and movement of peoples.

Mrs Barbut, Executive Secretary of the UNCCD, (via a video message) returned to the migrations caused by drought and the security stakes that have ensued. **Mrs Andrea Ostheimer de Sosa**, Director for Africa of the Konrad Adenauer-Stiftung (KAS) proposed different types of proactive responses to the different phenomena that the West Africa region is facing. **Mr Sanoh Nfaly**, Director of Freedom of Movement and Tourism of ECOWAS, mentioned the programme on climate change that has already been put in place at ECOWAS and the synergies with migration management in the free movement area.

Three sessions were organised during the two-day workshop.

On **Wednesday 18 May**, the following questions were discussed during **sessions 1 and 2**. In essence, the discussions focused on:

- Anticipatory actions by ECOWAS on migration policy and resource management;
- Land insecurity, the difficulties young people have to access land and the need to restore degraded land;
- Arid and coastal ecosystems and the role of the National Community Development Agency in each ECOWAS country;
- The Green Climate Fund and the role played by the local authorities in climatic migration management;
- Possible opportunities to restore degraded land, build capacity and draw lessons from previous experiments;
- Regional development, water control, coastal erosion, renewable sources of energy and the possibility of capitalising on promising development experiments for the benefit of populations who are vulnerable to climate change and land degradation;
- The possibility to conduct regional studies on climate change and land degradation prior to the implementation of a programme for the promotion of green jobs in West Africa;
- Participatory management and the problem of mining companies that continue to impair the environment.

Session 3 of Thursday 19 May discussed the following problems:

- Policy strategies to be adopted for the G5-SAHEL and how to capitalise West African youth skills in terms of human capital;
- How to involve the private sector in the resilience strategies;
- How to conduct assessments of the ecosystem services which also take into account of population movements;
- The possibility of cooperation by and between NATO and ECOWAS concerning capacity building in the security sector.

III. Closing session

6 (six) addresses were delivered during the closing session:

Mrs Ostheimer de Sosa, Director of the KAS Africa Department, stated that the experts present have shown that the agricultural sector remains an important pillar for the West African national economies. The land can be regenerated thanks to the positive attainments and exchanges of good practices between the governments and local populations. **Mrs Camilla Nordheim-Larsen**, Great Green Wall Team Leader of GM-UNCCD dwelt on the migrations caused by land degradation. She proposed to put in place early warning systems to prevent conflicts, but also to rehabilitate land and to stem the decline of agricultural productivity. She stated that migrants should benefit from different solutions considered, but that continuous data collection was needed to document land degradation and migration.

Mr Danziger, Regional Coordinator of the IOM in Dakar, returned to what needs to be done to raise awareness about to the new world context of land degradation, but also to the international mobility of persons. His comments focused on the importance of equity in the approach to development; the bolstering of the policy of ECOWAS on free movement of people and goods; but also work on synergies for more coordinated actions on migration policies. For his part, **Mr Sanoh Nfaly**, the representative of

ECOWAS, insisted on the need to approach the issues (land degradation, climate change and migrations) from a regional angle. In his view, partnerships are needed (ECOWAS-European Union, for example) to pool efforts and maximise investment niches. The next speaker, **Mrs Ramatoulaye Dieng Ndiaye**, Secretary General of the Senegalese Ministry of the Environment and Sustainable Development, stated that the objectives of the Workshop had been achieved. She stressed the need to territorialise public policies further and improve the investment climate, while insisting on equity and gender equality and the reduction of vulnerability risks that can be diluted by adopting the Sustainable Development Goals for 2030. The **Minister of Foreign Affairs, of Cooperation and the Burkinabe Abroad, Mr Alpha Barry** underscored that the Workshop raises challenges which, if taken up, can entail development opportunities for African countries.

The purpose of the final report is to highlight the main lines of the discussion and potential initiatives that can lead to pertinent recommendations, such as the ones which follow.

IV. Recommendations and potential options at the national level

1. Develop and promote entrepreneurship and green jobs through coherent national policies and pilot projects, which support green companies and their conversion, but also by putting in place participatory programmes in favour of green employment that can help the most vulnerable populations to benefit from green growth.
2. Take into account the concerns about land degradation, climate change and migration in national census and survey operations;
3. Involve the beneficiary populations in the identification, implementation and monitoring of social and environmental resilience initiatives at the local and national level through sectorial programmes;
4. Proof of links between the security stakes of DLDD must be brought up and considered in the different sectorial policies;
5. Assume the rehabilitation and development of abandoned and unproductive lands at government level, by considering local expertise.

6. Facilitate access to land through land reforms that consider all the new routes and destinations of environmental migration and the introduction of regulations and water points for transhumance cattle.
7. Reinforce early warning systems and disaster risk management to prevent massive population movements and possible social conflicts;
8. Increase the financial support for Sustainable Land Management and land rehabilitation initiatives aimed at different objectives: support entrepreneurial projects by migrants; promote innovative financing instruments; strengthen the empowerment of women; develop the cultural dimension of responses to resilience by the local population (beliefs, values, habits and practices); develop value chains; capitalise on achievements and lessons learned to avoid the effect of natural resources degradation as conflict accelerator.

V. Main recommendations at the subregional level (ECOWAS)

1. Integrate the concerns relating to land degradation, climate change and migration in West Africa in the development policies and strategies of the States concerned and strengthen the legal framework at the subregional level (ECOWAS);
2. Oversee, protect and secure migrations in the ECOWAS area through regional legislation and reinforcement of portfolios concerning risk management with the support of international partners (**European Union, IOM, United Nations, development banks, etc.**);
3. Reinforce the regional coordination frameworks and platforms geared to problems relating to employment, land management, migration, agriculture, energy questions, gender and governance, as well as policies to reinforce the social protection mechanisms;
4. Initiate consultations and dialogues at regional level to activate the theme groups put in place by ECOWAS (migration, environment, climate change), so as to draw lessons from good practices in order to promote Sustainable Land Management in areas subject to migration through innovative financing mechanisms;

5. Support the development of a programme that takes into account migration aspects as part of the implementation of the Subregional Action Plan to Combat Land Degradation and Desertification of ECOWAS, whilst considering the opportunities offered by the ECOWAS Common Approach Policy for Migration (free movement of people) recently put in place.
6. Consolidate the cooperation between **the European Union and NATO** to include the effects of land degradation and climate change on security matters;
7. Strengthen the cooperation between ECOWAS and the **European Union** on the issue of "environment-migration."
8. Strengthen the capacities of ECOWAS to help its member countries to access climate funds (Clean Development Mechanisms (CDM) or the Climate Investment Fund (CIF) of the ADB, etc.) taking due account of climatic migrations and solutions for adaptation based on sustainable land management.
9. Develop and reinforce the research capacities by involving the major institutions who work on climate and climate change (ASECNA, AGRHYMET, WASCAL, etc.) by multiplying the exchanges with them and by using their services. Multilateral financing (in particular with the European Union) and joint research initiatives should be encouraged in that direction.
10. Harmonise the collection of (accurate, comparable and complete) data on migration, land degradation and climate change at the ECOWAS scale.
11. Conduct regional and prospective studies on the pathways, motivations and impact of environmental migrants.
12. Promote the implementation of concrete, convincing proposals for the application of the Kampala Convention for the Protection and Assistance of Internally Displaced Persons in Africa.
13. The potential of migrants should be reinforced further through the transfer of funds as resilient elements to bolster climate change adaptation strategies. A resilient fund could be put in place by ECOWAS through programmes that encourage and facilitate transfers of funds with the support of the European Union and other strategic partners (banks, etc.).

