

## POSITIONS OF CIVIL SOCIETY IN BURKINA FASO IN VIEW OF THE COP13

June 8 and 9, 2017 – Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso

Preparing the COP13 of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification, about thirty Civil Society Organizations (CSOs), all members of the NGO Permanent Secretary (SPONG), gathered in Ouagadougou on June 8 and 9, 2017. This meeting allowed them to discuss, to share information and to formulate positions on the concept of Land Degradation Neutrality (LDN) and the Great Green Wall for the Sahara and the Sahel Initiative (GGWSSI).

***Burkinabe civil society supports the goal of a land-degradation neutral world by 2030.***

**Civil society organizations admit that they have to take this goal in charge, and that the Land Degradation Neutrality implementation cannot be done without their involvement.**

Therefore, CSOs must commit to:

- Inform, sensitize and train population on LDN,
- Involve themselves in the development, implementation and monitoring of LDN,
- Position themselves as intermediary between the State, technical and financial partners and rural population,
- Take into account gender question (women, youth and others vulnerable groups) within LDN implementation.

**LDM implementation should rely on Sustainable Land Management (SLM) practices**, already known and carried out by CSOs. Moreover, some field projects they led already contribute to achieve LDN. In order to recognize and highlight those activities, it is necessary to capitalize and popularize good practices. Besides, **the collaboration of Burkinabe population within LDN implementation is fundamental.**

To this end, CSOs identify requirements as:

- Existence of a collective awareness among the Burkinabe population about negative impacts of desertification ;
- Mastering of sustainable land management (SLM) and degraded land rehabilitation practices by farmers (for instance zai holes, half moons or stone barriers).

Finally, **Land Degradation Neutrality needs a strong involvement from the State and technical and financial partners.**

*For the State, it implies:*

- To create suitable institutional circumstances,
- To raise funds for LDN projects.

*For technical and financial partners, it implies:*

- To raise funds for LDN implementation,
- To strengthen CSOs on LDN concept and practices,
- To mobilize the international community behind LDN.

*The Great Green Wall for the Sahara and the Sahel Initiative provides a powerful framework for the implementation of LDN.*

With a mutual agreement, CSOs recognize that **the Great Green Wall for the Sahara and the Sahel Initiative has a leading role to play for LDN implementation**. There is indeed coherence between goals aimed by the GGWSSI (to improve land productivity with SLM and natural resources preservation) and LDN principles (to avoid land degradation, to improve their productivity and to rehabilitate degraded lands).

Therefore, LDN implementation in Burkina Faso should:

- Rely on GGW institutional frameworks already in place,
- Consider municipal scale as the first level for planning and implementing activities.

**Civil society organisations also have a role as partners for the GGWSSI implementation.** Burkinabe CSOs are indeed able to mobilize and sensitize stakeholders about SLM good practices.

CSOs raise funds for field project and they are able to provide support to scale up LDN good practices.

CSOs are finally involved in LDN participatory monitoring and evaluation. They also involve into environmental policies monitoring and advocacy toward decision-makers.

Thus, in order to improve their participation in GGW achievement, CSOs recommend to:

- Reinforce complementarity and synergy between CSOs and GGW through their actions,
- Enhance communication for a better visibility of GGW,
- Scale up strong and model actions in land rehabilitation to disseminate them within populations.

*These large-scale interventions on sustainable land management must involve women and youth.*

CSOs express concerns about **the necessity to involve women and youth in SLM actions contributing to achieve the GGW and LDN**.

Women indeed have a key role in SLM, climate change adaptation through their involvement in household nutrition stages, from the field to the plate (production, transformation, conservation and sale). However, Burkinabe women suffer of a high illiteracy rate, because of marginalising social practices they have a poor access to land ownership and funds. Furthermore, women are poorly represented in decision-making structures.

**Young people constitute the labour force, they are the future of families, of the country and of the planet.** They also have an essential role to play in SLM and climate change adaptation (good practices at the village scale and research at the university scale).

To improve the involvement of women and young people, CSOs advise to:

- Support training and sensitization of women about their land access rights,
- Support and finance income-generating activities relying on SLM for women and young people,
- Promote environmental education for youth,
- Strengthen youth regarding SLM concepts and good practices as well as climate change adaptation.