

Summary Report

As part of the « *Building Resilience through Innovation, Communication and Knowledge Services* » (BRICKS) project, a workshop of communication experts was held in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso from 26th to 29th May, 2014. It was organized by the International Union for the Conservation of Nature Central and West African Programme (IUCN-PACO), in collaboration with the Permanent Inter-States Committee on Drought Control in the Sahel (CILSS), the Sahara and Sahel Observatory (SSO) and the World Bank.

The workshop brought together about fifty participants including project team coordinators from 8 countries (Benin, Burkina Faso, Ethiopia, Niger, Senegal, Sudan, Chad and Togo) of the 12 member countries of the Sahel and West African Programme in support of the Great Green Wall Initiative (SAWAP), members of the team in charge of communication activities of the SAWAP projects, IUCN, CILSS and World Bank communication officers, representatives of institutions and networks of the Great Green Wall Initiative (UNCCD Global Mechanism, FAO, TerrAfrica, CARI, ReSad) and the Burkina Faso, Niger and Sudan focal points for the Great Green Wall.

The objectives of the workshop were as follows:

- To present and validate the communication strategy and action plan of the BRICKS project aimed at achieving the 4 communication objectives that were approved at the inception of the said project;
- Present and consider the findings of the survey on communication needs assessment of the 12 SAWAP countries;
- Complement and validate the list of identified stakeholders;
- Identify the hindrances to and opportunities for the sharing of best practices and collaboration among project teams;
- Identify and clarify the roles of every actor in the implementation of the specific communication strategy, for each target group identified in the draft communication strategy of the BRICKS project;
- Develop an annual coordinated plan of action among the three executing agencies of the BRICKS project for the period covering 1st July 2014 to 30th June 2015;
- Present the communication tools that will be used for implementing the strategy (training).

The workshop was facilitated by two international consultants, some members of the IUCN Commission on Education and Communication (CEC) and the Officer in charge of Communication and Relations with IUCN Members, in collaboration with a local consultant.

I- Opening ceremony

It was marked by the address delivered by Mister Jean-Marc Garreau, Representing the Regional Director of IUCN for Central and West Africa.

Following his welcome words to the workshop participants, he gave an overview of the BRICKS project, recalling its objectives and the role of each of the executing agencies in the implementation of the project. This helped to understand that the workshop of communication experts is part of the responsibilities assigned to IUCN within the framework of the BRICKS project. Mr. Garreau also mentioned IUCN's roles and skills in terms of knowledge collection and management, development of, and influence on standards and practices shared by societies across the world. Referring to the Commission on Education and Communication (CEC), he said that IUCN, through the outcome of its works, is striving to provide the global community with effective resources for communicating and using knowledge for positive change in conservation. He further stated that the presence and support of some members of this Commission at the workshop will help in pondering over the best strategies for drawing attention and getting more actors to adhere to the works initiated by the projects under the SAWAP programme, towards more sustainable land and natural resource management for the future of Sahelian societies. Mr. Garreau also reiterated the commitment of IUCN to working in synergy with the other implementing agencies to build a community of sustainable practice for a world that conserves and values nature. Closing his remarks, he thanked the World Bank, CILSS and SSO.

II- Inaugural presentations

Three presentations were made:

1- *The Great Green Wall (GGW) platform* by Mr. Alexander Asen, Communication Officer of the Global Mechanism of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (CCD)

The platform is being designed and will be launched in June 2014. The target audience is made up of institutional, technical and financial partners, CSOs and local communities. It will be of easy access, attractive and visible on social networks and will operate based on a contents management system made up of articles, news, photographs, videos, workshop reports, etc. The platform will allow the organization of discussion groups moderated by an administrator.

2- *The BRICKS project and the portfolio of SAWAP projects*, by Mr. Emmanuel Nikiéma, senior specialist of natural resources management, World Bank Burkina Faso

Recalling the objective of the BRICKS project, Mr. Nikiéma unfolded the various country projects, emphasizing the fact that the BRICKS project is a strong link cementing the respective SAWAP projects that contribute to the building of the Great Green Wall. He indicated that a grant agreement by GEF was signed on October 15th, 2013 with an amount of USD 4.6 million for a period of 6 years.

3- *The BRICKS project implementing agencies*, by Mr. Jean-Marc Garreau, representing the Regional Director of IUCN -PACO

Mr. Garreau indicated that the project is being implemented by three agencies, namely CILSS which is the host institution of the project, IUCN -PACO and the SSO, in three distinct fields. CILSS is responsible for coordinating knowledge management and dissemination, SSO for geospatial applications and monitoring-evaluation of the project portfolio while IUCN is giving advice in the fields of biodiversity, networking and communication strategies. The BRICKS project is above the SAWAP programme (a platform for the 12 countries) and delivers operational services in order to (i) contribute to the identification of innovations, (ii) promote innovations through enhanced communication and (iii) put knowledge at the service of investments in resilience building.

At the end of these presentations, participants asked questions to clarify the functioning of the Great Green Wall platform which is being developed by the Global Mechanism of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification. They also asked some clarifications on the linkages between this platform and the one envisaged under the BRICKS project. They finally sought to further understand the project and the role of the respective executing agencies.

III- The proceedings

1- Designation of rapporteurs and time keepers

The following rapporteurs and time keepers were designated before the start of the deliberations:

Day 1:

<u>Rapporteurs :</u>	Mr. Désiré Komou, PGICT, Togo Mrs Kafando Zongo Hamsata, CPP-CN, Burkina Faso
<u>Time Keeper:</u>	Mr. Arona Niang, Ministry of Agriculture, Senegal

Day 2:

<u>Rapporteurs :</u>	Mr. Saidou Daoura, CAP3, Niger Miss Géraldine Allemand, CARI, France
<u>Time Keeper:</u>	Mr. Mubarak A. Ginawi, Ministry for Environment, Forest and Physical Development, Sudan

Day 3:

<u>Rapporteur :</u>	Miss Lurhielle Dossou Yovo, Communication Intern at IUCN -PACO, Senghor University in Alexandria, Egypt
<u>Time Keeper :</u>	Mrs Wade Penda Mbow, Ministry of Agriculture, Senegal

General rapporteurs were Mr. Ablassé Bilgo, CILSS/Agrhymet, Niger; Mr. Hien Christophe, Consultant ; and Félicité Mangang, IUCN-PACO.

2- Presentations, group work and discussions

The methodology of the workshop was a participatory one, guided by the principles of professional updating, adult learning and group work.

The deliberations were conducted in sessions, all of which were complementary and aimed at reaching the objectives of the workshop. Each session was made up of preliminary presentations followed by diverse assignments, group work (mixed groups and /or per country delegations in some cases), presentation of group reports in plenary sessions and discussions. The following issues were discussed during the various sessions:

- Introduction to participants and projects
- Branding of the Great Green Wall Initiative
- Roles of communication for BRICKS
- Internal /external communication
- Identification and typology of country project stakeholders
- Stakeholder analysis
- SWOT analysis of BRICKS/SAWAP
- Enhancing the BRICKS communication strategy
- Improving the BRICKS communication plan of action
- Validation of the communication strategy and action plan

The following key points were highlighted from the various assignments and discussions:

- The need for ensuring the following qualitative features in order to achieve effective communication: use of key words, clear objectives, assurance in the discourse, issues at stake, contextualization, persuasion, action on sensitiveness, good introduction to the topic, readiness to capture ideas, tailoring the discourse to local initiatives .
- The need for tailoring each discourse to the peculiarities of the respondent selected in advance given that each target audience has a different communication objective.
- Involving stakeholders is a must if one is to achieve one's objectives.
- The need for having a shared communication plan in order to avoid scattered actions.
- The need for adapting each communication strategy to the specificity of targets and available financial resources.

IV- Recommendations

The participants made the following recommendations:

- The actors' understanding of the BRICKS institutional environment and the linkages among the BRICKS project, SAWAP and the Great Green Wall Initiative should be enhanced.
- All working documents should be made available in French and English and good simultaneous translation should be provided at meetings under the BRICKS project in order to make discussions and interactions easier.
- Synergy should be built among existing Portals (TerrAfrica, CILSS) and those in the pipeline (BRICKS, GGW) so as to allow complementary actions, spare efforts and achieve improved visibility of the BRICKS project.
- The results of capitalization on sustainable land management should be further developed.
- The existing national expertise should be promoted for the benefit of both SAWAP and BRICKS projects.

At the end of the deliberations, the participants signed the « *Ouagadougou Declaration* », reasserting their commitment to working together towards the objectives of the BRICKS project's communication strategy, namely:

- Harmonizing the strategy, actions and tools to support the Great Green Wall Initiative and the regional multi-partner dialogue;

- Establishing a community of practice and promoting collaboration among project teams and major stakeholders of the SAWAP portfolio and BRICKS executing agencies;
- Effectively capitalizing on and disseminating knowledge on integrated natural resource management, climate change and natural disaster management;
- Providing support and developing communication skills of the SAWAP project teams.

Initially planned for participants to attend the launching of the 3rd phase of the Burkina Faso SAWAP project (PNGT2-3), the day of 29th May, 2014 was instead dedicated to capacity building sessions for participants on their preferred topics including the following:

- a) The basics of strategic communication;
- b) Terms of Reference for a communication specialist;
- c) Social networks;
- d) Lobbying.

The participants in the workshop of communication experts within the framework of the BRICKS project thanked the organizers, the Government and people of Burkina Faso for their warm welcome.

Ouagadougou, May 28th, 2014

The participants