

Great Green Wall for the Sahara and the Sahel initiative



Capacity development strategy and action plan in support of the implementation of the Great Green Wall for the Sahara and the Sahel Initiative

Validation Workshop
Joly Hotel, Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso, 1–2 July 2013



Introduction

The Great Green Wall of the Sahara and the Sahel Initiative (GGWSSI) received substantial support from technical and financial partners, including the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the European Union (EU), the Global Mechanism (GM) of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD), World Bank, Global Environment Facility (GEF), the Permanent Interstate Committee for Drought Control in the Sahel (CILSS) Sahara and Sahel Observatory (OSS), the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN), the Royal Botanic Gardens of Kew, the Association for the Promotion of Education and Training Abroad (APEFE), etc. It also received support from groups of civil society actors, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and professional associations. The degradation of the natural resources under anthropic pressure and global climate change call for measures targeting the Sahelian and Saharan areas. Actions have already been successfully conducted to combat this degradation. It is a question of streamlining these actions and above all, to facilitate their implementation by the local communities.

Different actions are planned for the implementation of the Great Green Wall for the Sahara and Sahel initiative :

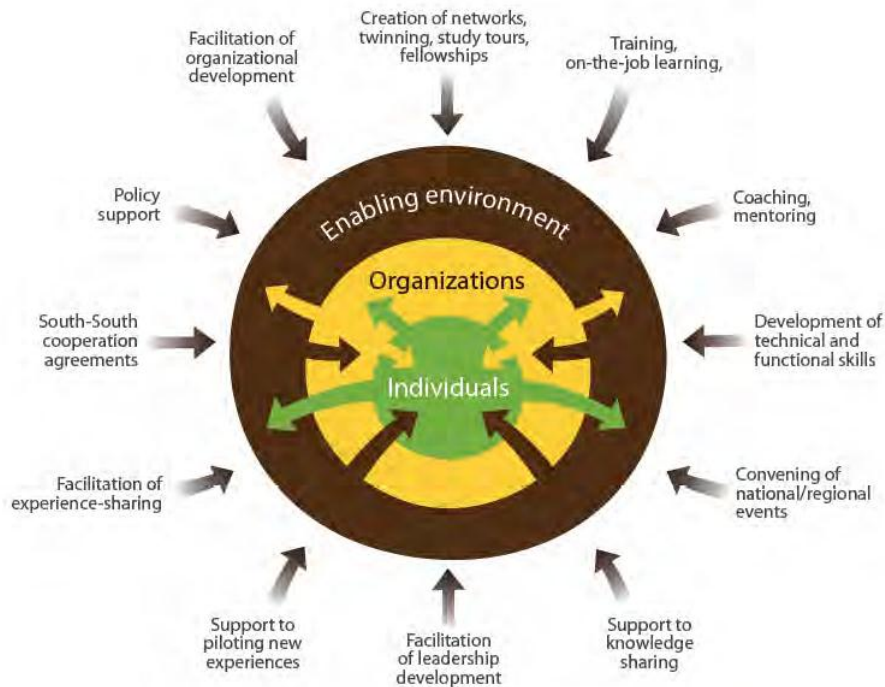
- formulating and validating a harmonized regional strategy approved in September 2012 by the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment (AMCEN);
- developing and setting up national action plans (NAPs) for all the countries covered by the Initiative. Currently, ten countries have approved their plan, four others are preparing their plan and are about to have it validated);
- formulating and creating a project portfolio in the countries covered by the Initiative including transnational or transboundary projects; specific projects have been identified and one project is already under way;
- developing a partnership platform for mobilizing resources, sharing knowledge and good practices as well as for the visibility of the Initiative;
- formulating and applying a Capacity Development Strategy and action plan in support to the Great Green Wall for the Sahara and Sahel Initiative (the subject of this document);
- developing and implementing a communication strategy and action plan to support the Great Green for the Sahara and Sahel Initiative .

Capacity development: definition

A widely accepted definition describes capacity as “the ability of people, organizations and society as a whole to manage their affairs successfully”. It includes the ability to create, understand, analyse, develop, plan, achieve the set objectives, discuss the results of actions, pursue a vision, and to change and transform oneself.

The definition, as adopted in the FAO Strategy on capacity development (CD), defines it as “the process of unleashing, strengthening and maintaining of such capacity”. Capacity development concerns, notably, policy and social aspects, in addition to technical aspects, and must take into account the following three dimensions:

- Individual
- Organizational
- Enabling environment.



Capacity development with respect to the management of the natural resources and the environment that will facilitate the implementation of the Great Green Wall for the Sahara and the Sahel Initiative is not only required in terms of filling gaps in knowledge and know-how through training. Even with a sufficient level of knowledge, men and women are not always capable of applying it to development or of guaranteeing the proper monitoring of activities under way. To be competent increasingly requires being able to manage complex and unstable situations; the challenge is great, in particular for the officers involved in the management of environmental issues, due mainly to their physical, legislative or institutional environment. It should also be noted that there are scientific and technological competences within universities and research centres that are, however, inadequately recognized beyond their “specializations”.

Capacity development therefore expands to three levels:

- the systemic level (the enabling environment dimension) to facilitate the coordination and harmonization of practices and approaches in implementing the Great Green Wall related actions;
- the institutional level (the organization dimension of actors) to facilitate the rationalization of consultation frameworks and increase their effectiveness and efficiency;
- the individual level (the individual dimension) to strengthen and develop scientific and technical skills of individual actors.

For FAO, capacity development has “traditionally been associated with knowledge transfer and training of individuals, yet it is a **complex, non-linear and long-term change process** in which no single factor (e.g. information, education and training, technical assistance, policy advice, etc.) can by itself be an explanation for the development of capacity. It contributes to addressing specific needs of member countries and (sub)regions across the three inter-linked individual, organizational, and enabling environment dimensions.”¹

Formulating the capacity development strategy and action plan in support of the Great Green Wall: the adopted approach

The development of a CD/GGW strategy and action plan began in August 2012 and will end in July 2013. The adopted approach consists of the following steps:

- carrying out a needs analysis;
- formulating a draft version;
- sharing this draft with partners and stakeholders for comments;
- organizing a validation workshop on the basis of the strategy and action plan draft proposal.

The CD/GGW strategy and action plan were developed in tandem with the preparation of National Action Plans (NAPs) (only seven GGW NAPs were ready by August 2012), and discussions on the Partnership Platform. It would have been ideal to have been able to rely on all the action plans in order to identify the needs in terms of available capacities required for their implementation and to formulate the capacity development strategy and action plan. The countries did not have the same conditions to develop and validate the action plans. It was perfectly natural that this process would take time.

However, the CD/GGW strategy was based on the available GGW NAPs as well as other strategies such as the National Action Plan for the Environment (NAPE), the National Action Plan to Combat Desertification (CCD NAP), the National Action Plan to Combat Climate Change (CC NAPs), and the National Capacity Self-Assessment (NCSA), and based on the results and achievements of capacity-development workshops included in projects of the African Union Commission in support of the implementation of the GGW Initiative.

Coherence between actions underway (NAPs, the platform, capacity development) must be assured and their synergy developed as follows:

- The CD/GGW strategy and action plan is based on the harmonized strategy of the GGW, the NAPs and various studies or programmes carried out at the continental level. The CD/GGW is integrated into the partnership platform approach being developed and extends its regional action or precedes it at the local and national level.
- An analysis is based on the missions and exchanges with the GGW focal points and partnerships, and the analysis of other programmes.

The vision for Capacity Development in 2020 in support of the GGW Initiative affirms that: good practices will be widely disseminated and adapted under different conditions; innovations will be integrated into the sectoral and cross-cutting policies; and efforts made and achievements in the implementation of GGWSSI will be widely known and adopted by the concerned rural communities, as well as technicians and decision makers.

¹ FAO, 2010. FAO capacity development learning module 1 – Enhancing FAO’s practices for supporting capacity development of member countries http://www.fao.org/docs/eims/upload/298016/LM1_hi_res_IDWGsite.pdf

The overall objective of the GGWSSI is to:

improve the resilience of human and natural systems in Sahel and Saharan areas faced with climate change through sound ecosystem management and sustainable development of natural resources (water, soil, vegetation, fauna, flora), protection of tangible and intangible rural heritage, the development of rural production and sustainable development hubs, improvement of living conditions and livelihoods of people living in these areas.

A Concept Note developed by FAO in collaboration with APEFE, the West and Central Africa MDG Centre and the Global Mechanism (GM) of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) served as a point of departure for the preparation of the strategy document and the CD action plan to support the implementation of the GGWSSI. It contains the following basic principles:

- **Leadership and ownership by the country** and the focal institution of the GGW Initiative in each country: To achieve this, the countries shall commit themselves to the formulation of the capacity development strategy and action plan at the national, subregional and continental levels. They will similarly define the precise objectives in terms of CD in order to **support the implementation of their national GGW strategy and action plan.**
- **Alignment with country needs and priorities:** The needs and priorities of countries must guide the interventions concerning CD. The needs, gaps and obstacles related to CD must be better defined, and the strengths, existing capacities as well as the vision of the actors at the national level must be discussed and agreed on.
- **Use and capitalization of the national systems and local expertise:** *Capitalizing* on the initiatives and expertise already in place will be essential for respond to needs. It will be necessary not only to ensure that efforts **are not duplicated**, but also to create synergies/strengthen the existing programmes and fill in gaps. **It is not a one-size-fits-all approach.** There is no master plan for the CD. The tailored solutions are essential for responding to needs in a particular development context for the GGW.
- **Different tools and entities** (e.g. universities, formal training, on-line training, exchange visits, rural schools, etc.) **should be used and/or set up** to guarantee efficient capacity development and to achieve the GGW objectives in the long term
- **An approach on several levels:** CD entails an intrinsic **strengthening** of existing capacities and assets, which takes place in a cross-cutting manner over three overlapping and interdependent levels: **individual, organizational and the enabling environment.** An approach on several levels allows to take into account the relationship/links between these three dimensions and to seek the main cause of a given weakness in capacities detected at a given level on another level.

- **Mutual responsibility:** The donors, the public authorities and the technical partners have an obligation to report on the development results to the beneficiaries. Transparency serves as an essential instrument to assure public responsibility concerning the financial resources, the practices of institutional management, planning and service provision.
- **Monitoring and evaluation (M&E),** as key tools for learning and adapting to a developing situation are also essential for the accountability systems. M&E capacity must be allowed to develop within the national GGW institutions.
- **The harmonization of actions and the partnership:** Many development agencies coming from the United Nations system, from medium-income countries, international funds, the private sector and civil society organizations have increased their level of contributions and brought their enriching CD experiences. It is therefore recommended to achieve a more efficient harmonization and to introduce more inclusive partnerships in order for the objectives and vision of the GGW to be realized and for actions to have a greater impact.
- **An approach targeting key actors towards effective GGW implementation:** These actors include: local communities, in particular, youth and women; civil society; national and local decision makers (municipalities, rural communes); coordination organizations of the GGW implementation; national agencies of the GGW; the Pan-African agency for the GGW; institutions in charge of coordination; opinion leaders; sector and producers' groups; heads of ministries; the deconcentrated state services; the members of Parliament; and the continuing education and degree programme sector (universities and institutes) in managing ecosystems.

The Organization of the Validation Workshop, Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso, 1-2 July 2013

Objectives of the workshop:

The Validation Workshop of the capacity development strategy and action plan will be held in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso, on 1 and 2 July 2013. It will be organized by the Partnership Programme of the Association for the Promotion of Education and Training Abroad (APEFE) with the Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security, the African Union Commission, the European Union, Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the Global Mechanism (GM) of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD), and the West and Central Africa MDG Centre. During this event, the participants will be able to:

- analyse the components of the capacity development (CD) strategy and action plan (objectives, relevance of selected target beneficiaries, logical framework);
- contribute with recommendations to finalize the draft documents of the “Capacity development strategy and action plan in support of the implementation of the Great Green Wall for the Sahara and the Sahel Initiative”;
- identify existing opportunities for the implementation of the CD strategy and action plan (roles and responsibilities of the partners in terms of technical and financial contributions).

The draft version of the strategy and action plan will be disseminated electronically to the participants (in English and French) two weeks before the workshop.

Participants:

The workshop will involve the focal points of the GGWSSI and representatives of the following countries and institutions: Algeria, Burkina Faso, Djibouti, Egypt, Ethiopia, The Gambia, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Sudan, Chad, APEFE, the African Union Commission, the Pan-African Agency of the GGW, the Permanent Interstate Committee for Drought Control in the Sahel (CILSS), the International Union for Conservation of Nature (UICN), Drynet, *Secrétariat Permanent des ONG – Réseau Sahel Désertification* (SPONG-RESAD, Permanent Secretariat of NGOs – Sahel Desertification Network), the Representative of municipalities (Burkina Faso, Dori and Djibo); the Representative of Producers' Associations (ROPA Burkina Faso), FAO, the MDG Centre for West and Central Africa, the Global Mechanism (GM) of the UNCCD, the Global Environment Facility (GEF) Secretariat, World Bank, the European Union, Reach Italia, the Royal Botanic Gardens of Kew, the United Nations Development Programme-Drylands Development Centre (UNDP-DDC) and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP).

Working methodology

- Plenary session to present and discuss results obtained during the workshop as well as the content of the draft paper of the CD strategy and action plan in support of the GGW implementation.
- Working groups session to analyse and validate priority needs in terms of capacity development, the targeted beneficiaries, the priority objectives and the expected outcomes.
- Working group session to analyse the logical framework as well as the implementation opportunities (contribution of technical and financial partners).
- Plenary session for feedback from working groups and summarizing recommendations.

Overview of the workshop

Working languages: English and French (simultaneous translation)

Draft version of the Workshop Programme

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| 30 June: Arrival of Participants | | |
| Day One: 1 July | | |
| Morning | | |
| Session chaired by a representative from Burkina Faso | | |
| 09.00 – 09.30 am | Official opening | Representatives of the African Union Commission, Burkina Faso, APEFE, European Union |
| 09.30 – 09.45 am | Individual presentation of participants | |
| 09.45 – 10.15 am | Introduction to the workshop: Presentation of objectives and expected outcomes of the workshop and of the programme; general and logistic information; working methodology, Clarifying questions or remarks | Didier Woirin (APEFE) and Nora Berrahmouni (FAO) |

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|---|---|-----------------------------------|
| 10.15 – 10.30 am | Coffee break | |
| 10.30 – 11.30 am | Presentation: Methodology for formulating the capacity development (CD) strategy and action plan, analytical results (priority needs in CD), vision, CD strategic objectives and action plan Clarifying questions | Benoit Delaite, FAO Consultant |
| 11.30 am – 1.00 pm | Introduction to the working groups session (first series) Analysis and validation: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • priority needs in terms of CD • targeted beneficiaries • priority objectives and expected outcomes | |
| 1.00-2.30 pm | Lunch | |
| Afternoon Follow-up of working groups session and reporting back | | |
| 2.30 – 3.30 pm | Finalization of the work by the working groups and preparation of the report | |
| 3.30 – 4.00 pm | Coffee break | |
| 4.00 – 5.30 pm | Feedback from working groups Discussion | Rapporteurs |
| 5.30 – 6.00 pm | Summary | |
| Day Two: 2 July | | |
| 08.30 – 09.00 am | Introduction to working groups and the composition of groups (second series): Analysis of logical framework Groups will be divided by strategic objectives The analysis will concern: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Operational objectives, expected outcomes, indicators, verification sources, activities, assumptions • Implementation: Role of partners based on their existing or planned interventions/opportunities | |
| 09.00 am–1.00 pm | Group work and preparation of the reports on feedback Coffee break (during the group work) | |
| 1.00 – 2.00 pm | Lunch | |
| 2.30 – 4.00 pm | Working groups reporting Discussion | Rapporteurs |
| 4.00 – 4.30 pm | Coffee break | |
| 4.30 – 5.30 pm | Summary of workshop results and next steps | |
| 5.30 – 6.00 pm | Workshop closure | |

For further information on the workshop, please contact:

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For more information on the Green Green Wall for the Sahara and the Sahel Initiative, see:

www.fao.org/partnerships/great-green-wall

