

NOTES ON THE REFLECTION PROCESS ON THE NSSD (NATIONAL STRATEGIES FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT) IN BURKINA FASO

These appreciations are based on the activities carried out by the steering committee and the national information workshop held on September 21 and 22, 2000.

1. The reflection process started prior to the CAD/OCDE initiative and was conducted by CONAGESE (National Council for Environmental Management) under the supervision of the Ministry of Environment and Water.
2. The CAD initiative goes along with an endogenous process mainly conducted by CONAGESE as a result of observations made on the difficulties faced in addressing environmental issues by other sectorial policies (assessment of the PAN/LCD first two phases).
3. An international NGO (particularly the Earth Council) supports the process as well.
4. The Cabinet recognized the importance of the initiative during its meeting in June 2000 and adopted it officially while entrusting the Ministry of Environment and Water with the responsibility to pursue it and formulate guidelines for an NSSD in Burkina Faso.
5. The idea of allowing the Ministry of the Environment and Water to conduct the process was actively discussed and denied by the Cabinet members who thought that this responsibility should be entrusted to the Ministry of Economy and Plan. It was the reason why the Government decided to organize a national information workshop which was held on September 21 and 22, 2000 in Ouagadougou.
6. The discussions on the NSSD concept in Burkina Faso finally resulted in a general consensus which considered the NSSD not only as a new planning document, but also as a framework explaining the principles of coordination between sectorial policies (including the environment), efficient coordination and evaluation mechanisms (particularly involving the civil society and the private sector). Right now, the steering committee is run as follows :
 - President : Director General of the Economy and Plan
 - Secretary : Ministry of the Environment and Water (CONAGESE)

The steering committee includes representatives from the civil society and the private sector.

7. The process specific objectives are defined as follows :
 - formulate guidelines to elaborate an NSSD in Burkina Faso
 - formulate orientations for financial partners in order to coordinate their policy, their principles and practices with NSSD requirements.

8. A state review has been determined with the following essential lessons :

- There is no link between sectorial or transversal policies, which complicates the fact of taking them into consideration. A typical case is the PAN/LCD which was adopted by the Cabinet but the modalities of its implementation have not been clearly defined yet.
- The CSLP is viewed as a federative framework which was designed without coordination : some key ministries (not including the Ministry of the Environment and Water) ; the civil society sector and the private sector have been marginalized; for example the CSLP elaboration didn't include the PAN/LCD and Sahel 21 achievements.
- There is no coordination system aimed at integrating policies and monitoring them ; actions have been planned to be taken in this regard concerning the rural sector with the elaboration of the LPDRD (Policy Letter for Decentralized Rural Development).
- There is sometimes a lack of synergy within the same ministerial department (this is very noticeable at the three conventions level : desertification control, climatic change, biodiversity).

9. Financial partners assume particular responsibilities at the following levels :

- They carry out their activities separately : for example the CSPL is supported by the World Bank and the IMF whereas the PAN/LCD is supported by UNDP and a series of bilateral cooperations (the Netherlands, France, Canada) ; there was no adequate synergy due to the lack of coordination. For example, the systems are not supported by the same donors in relation to the three conventions.
- Donors' agendas do not enable countries to implement their activities in compliance with consulting requirements (within public services and with the civil society).
- Donors endorse reports without examining the relevance of the elaboration process (for example participation is emphasized in the CSLP elaboration process, but this didn't occur so). Finally, there was no interruption between what happened and previous documents, due to the fact that the process was the same.
- Donors do not provide enough resources or provide them in conditions which don't favour appropriate national expertise or common agreement on actions as this should be.
- Several donors face difficulties in coordinating their practices with certain principles (sectorial approach aiming at coordinating actions within a given sector) : a typical example refers to difficulties faced in implementing the sectorial approach in the basic education sector.

10. Several constraints have also caused the weakness of capacities and the national leadership. The national leadership is hampered by local concern aiming at obtaining financial resources while attempting to comply with donors' expectations (as a matter of fact, some difficulties are noted in relation to the idea of ownership).

The public sector capacities are hindered by the civil service management system and the high administration : this crucial issue has never been addressed and discussed widely. Donors, as well as the state, all recognize the lack of capacity, which doesn't enable national leadership as the requirement of an effective NSSD.

The civil society and institutional organizations capacities are actually inadequate and financial partners' strategies are not sufficiently relevant to reinforce them.

11. The dialogue between actors (peasant organizations, companies, NGOs, public sector, unions and associations for human rights...) will take two months based on a reflection guide and conducted by experienced facilitators, and will come up with two types of recommendations :

- Guidelines for an NSSD in the country
- Guidelines for financial partners (in order to conduct guidance)
- Examples of experiences and practices (to include in the sourcebook and discuss recommendations).

12. Upon completion of the current process (in March), Burkina should make a choice : operationalize the guidelines which will serve as a guide for an NSSD at national level, or interrupt the process. The involvement of high ranking authorities shows that actions will not be discontinued.