

In Sahel, many civil society organizations are active on the ground, among the people, to reduce poverty. In rural areas, these organizations carry out actions that contribute to sustainable land management, adaptation to climate change and the combat against desertification. These CSOs recognize the interest of the Great Wall Initiative in the Sahara and Sahel as a policy framework for the deployment of sustainable land management and desertification control. For its part, the GGWSSI recognizes the quality CSOs' efforts, carried out in the field closed to populations. The GGWSSI also recognizes that these actions can contribute to achieve its goals.

But this mutual recognition is largely insufficient!

It is essential to involve civil society at the VARIOUS LEVELS OF INTERVENTION OF THE GGWSSI: strategy, policy and operational implementation

For the GGWSSI to offer relevant and adapted solutions to the problems faced by populations in territories of intervention, the orientations taken at the regional and national levels must emanate from the realities of these populations. Civil society organizations are spokespersons for people, and they are organized both at country and regional level in order to bring together the concerns on the ground and the solutions to remedy them.

Discussions between institutional actors, politicians and organized civil society must be decompartmentalized and mandatory!

To improve the effectiveness of GGWSSI interventions in the territories and avoid overlaps with other interventions, development actors in the territories must be able to situate their actions against those of the GGWSSI. CSOs fully informed about the Initiative, can support synergies with the GGWSSI for mutual benefits.

Centralization and dissemination of information on GGWSSI projects must be carried out at national and regional levels!

In order to achieve sustainable results within GGWSSI interventions, populations of the territories must accept them and appropriate them. CSOs deeply connected to GGWSSI territories know their communities, with whom they have built trusting relationships. Relying upon these CSOs will enable the GGWSSI to mobilize SLM expertise and an already established relationship with targeted populations.

Operational involvement of civil society in the implementation of GGWSSI on the ground must be programmed!

It is necessary to PROMOTE SYNERGIES between the actions carried out in the territories of municipalities and those carried by the National Structures of the GGWSSI

The GGWSSI communicates on its choice to have the municipalities as gateway for intervention, legitimacy of their territories is also recognized by the civil society. Within municipalities, multi-stakeholder consultation groups having appropriated the GGWSSI must be involved! These consultation groups will make possible the synergy of interventions between GGWSSI and other actors. These consultation groups will also be an asset for integrating the objectives of the GGWSSI in the municipal development planning documents. But to give substance to these groups, they must have access to the capitalization of actions led by GGWSSI and civil society. To this end, the ReSaD recommends identifying criteria for labeling projects promoted by civil society as contributing to the objectives of the GGWSSI. These criteria must be defined by using the GGWSSI frameworks of results used by the African Union and the Great Green Wall Panafrican Agency, as well as other frameworks such as the 4/1000 initiative and Land Degradation Neutrality. This work should not be delayed!

Identifying ways to VALORIZE THE CONTRIBUTION OF FIELD PROJECTS TO THE GGWSSI is a prerequisite for an effective and visible synergy of intervention!

The thematic workshop on the Great Green Wall, proposed during the Desertif'actions Summit, on June 20, 2019 in Ouagadougou, intends to contribute to this challenge by having a dialogue between the African Union, representatives of the GGWSSI in countries and civil society organizations active in the Initiative's territories. **A roadmap aimed at bringing together stakeholders around the realization of the Initiative is expected at the end of the workshop.**

Since its creation, the ReSaD is involved in the Great Wall Initiative in the Sahara and Sahel:

- **October 2012:** a regional meeting is organized in Ouagadougou so that the civil society appropriates the GGWSSI. Fifty organizations representatives from nine countries participated.
- **November 2013:** a national forum is organized in Dosso (Niger) to train and inform about GGWSSI, its strategy and its actions in Niger. 80 representatives of CSOs and local authorities participated.
- **2015 – 2018:** ReSaD National Platforms are partners in the implementation of the FLEUVE project in Burkina Faso, Mali and Niger. ReSaD implements the regional component of the FLEUVE project that is led by CARI.
- **2017 – 2018:** ReSaD is partner of the regional project "Closing the Gaps in the Great Green Wall".
- **July 2018:** The African Union, IUCN and ReSaD are organizing a Great Green Wall - Civil Society Forum, with stakeholders from the Initiative's eleven countries. The final recommendations of the forum stress the need to put in place mechanisms for increased collaboration between GGWSSI agencies and civil society organizations.

The collaboration of ReSaD with the GGWSSI gives results both at the regional level and in countries.

Today, ReSaD confirms its commitment to work with GGWSSI on national and regional levels to overcome its challenges.

