Civil Society Coordination for the Environmental Protection and the Development of the Senegal river Basin

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Water and environmental resources management project of the Senegal river basin

(Guinea, Mali, Mauritania, Senegal)

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Introduction

Financed by the World Environmental Funds for a price-tag of US$ 7.25 million through its acting agencies such as the World Bank and the United Nations Programme for the Development (UNPD), the “Water and environmental resources management of OMVS” started in April 2004 for a period of 4 years.

After the construction of Diama and Manantali dams, the project aims to establish a strategically inclusive framework for the sustainable improvement of the water and environmental resources in the entire basin. The main objective upholding the project is to satisfy all water and environmental needs and to reduce high demands of already limited resources.

The CODESEN local action is how to involve civil society organizations in this project?
Geographical situation

The Senegal River Basin is 289 000 km² stretching through the States of Guinea, Mali, Mauritania and Senegal.

It is made up of three distinct parts:

- A mountainous region which stretches out between Fouta Djallon located in Guinea and the town of Bakel located in Senegal;

- The valley constituted of a plain of 20 km wide located between the town of Bakel and that of Dagana;

- The Delta located between the town of Dagana and the Atlantic Ocean where the Senegal river flows into the mouth.
Cartography of the Senegal river basin
Hydrology

The Senegal river has its source in the mountains of Fouta Djiallon in the Republic of Guinea. Its distance to the Atlantic Ocean is 1 800 km. It is made of three watercourses which are the Bafing (760 km), the Bakhoye (560 km) and the Falémé (650 km).
Cartography of the Senegal river
The Diama dam
The Diama dam is located near the village of Maka Diama, 27 km up stream from Saint-Louis. Construction works on it started September 12th, 1981 and the certificate of completion was delivered August 12th, 1986 to the building Compagny cohile the certificate of maintenance, final stage of the delivery was signed on March 18th, 1998.
The Manantali dam
The Manantali dam sits on the Bafing, 90 km South-East of Bafoulabé en the Republic of Mali. Construction works are started in June, 1982. The certificate of the completion was delivered to the building Compagny on March 31, 1988 and the certificate of maintenance in 1990.
The Problem

The local action of CODESEN is rooted in the implementation of the project of the Organization for the Development of the Senegal river basin (OMVS), being executed in the four (4) States bordering the Senegal river basin (Guinea, Mali, Mauritania, Senegal).

The main objective of this local action is to reinvigorate the member organizations of CODESEN at the national level and to increase alliances with other civil society organizations at the sub-regional level (Guinea, Mali, Mauritania) to achieve their effective participation in the planning, implementing and monitoring-evaluating the processes of the water and environmental resources management project of the Senegal river basin and other related OMVS projects.

The specific Objectives are:

- To consolidate the expansion of alliances with civil society organizations at the national and sub-regional levels in order to secure a better future for river communities of the Senegal river Basin;

- To promote constructive dialogue with administrative, political, traditional and religious authorities in the Senegal river Basin, as well as with OMVS officials, in order to create a will to develop and safeguard the Senegal river Basin environment;

- To ensure proper implementation and monitoring the Water and environmental resources management project and related projects of OMVS in order to improve the quality of environment and livelihoods of the river communities of the Senegal river Basin;

- To provide the training to members of civil society organizations within CODESEN to make them more effective and efficient in their work;
**Coordinated aims**

In addition to its member organizations, CODESENE national and sub-regional Action Plan capacity building aims to involve non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and community-based organizations (CBOs) working in the Senegal river Basin such as:

- Women’s associations;
- Youth associations;
- Sports and cultural associations;
- Professional organizations (artisans, breeders, farmers, fishermen);
- Local collectives or local elected officials.
What we are doing about the problem

CODESEN was founded in Dakar; Senegal in 1997 to work on the Senegal river basin. CODESEN now coordinates 150 NG0s CB0s working for the protection and the development of the Senegal river basin.

Strategies

As part of the implementation of its Action Plan (March, 2004-February, 2005), CODESEN initiated a national and sub-regional Mission capacity-building project financed by the Swedish Society for Nature Conservation (SSCN).

CODESEN strategies were put in place accordingly as the mission developed its ability to create conditions of effective participation of its member organizations within a partnership working for the overall economic and social development of communities of the Senegal river basin.

The principal strategies from March, 2004 to February, 2005 are as follows:

- A broad dialogue with officials of the OMVS High Commission and with donor partners (World Bank, African Development Bank, Global Fund for the Environment, etc.);

- An expansion of CODESEN sub-regional activities to include Guinea, Mali and Mauritania and the relevant community-based...
Obstacles & Opportunities

In its national and sub-regional Action Plan, CODESEN has promoted civil society organizations and populations increased participation in running the project of OMVS, namely its items 4 and 5 dealing with the Micro-finance and the Public involvement with an emphasis on women’s sustainable participation.

Nevertheless, all participation process will be along the lines of useful information sharing with all other actors so as to give them the opportunity to be part of the decision-making process. For that purpose it’s necessary that available data be shared by all actors on-site according to their needs.
Lessons & Achievements

The Action Plan start-up has rightly targeted the civil society organizations as key-partners in the Public participation in water and environmental resources management of the Senegal river basin.

Lessons learnt and achievements at the end of CODESEN national and sub-regional Mission are:

- Starting an information and exchange process with the various partners operating in the Senegal river basin with a description of the project of OMVS, mostly its items 4 and 5 dealing with Micro-finance ad Public participation;

- Substantiating the NGOs member of CODESEN, the CBOs, decentralized local entities, private service providers operating in the Senegal river basin in order for them to effectively participate in sustainable water and environmental resources management;

- Stressing what is at stake and opportunities, the expected results and mechanisms of information and communication;

- Agreeing to cooperate in the framework of the project of OMVS.
Conclusion

The Action Plan of CODESEN consists in:

- Facilitating constructive dialogue and harmony between the communities within the Senegal River Basin in terms of the use of resources;
- Facilitating a wide dissemination of information to member organizations and other civil society organizations working in the Senegal river Basin;
- Providing the training to members of civil society organizations within CODESEN to make them more effective and efficient in their work;
- Supporting civil society organizations in their fundraising activities planned in the framework of the project of OMVS, related to the Public Participation and Micro-finance.