



# REPORT OF THE REGIONAL WORKSHOP FOR WEST AND CENTRAL AFRICA

Date: 12-13-14 August 2019,

Lieu: Yaoundé, Cameroon (TOUNG'OU Hotel)

## OBJECTIVES:

- Consultation of members for GNDR new Strategy
- Capacity building on local fundraising
- Capacity building on the role of CSOs in building resilience in the development agenda

## 1. Introduction

The **Global Network of Civil Society Organizations for Disaster Reduction (GNDR)** organizes a regional workshop every two years for its members in the different regions. This year, the regional workshop for West Central Africa was held on 12, 13 and 14 August 2019 in Yaoundé, Cameroon. The objective of this meeting was to collect contributions and inform members about GNDR new strategy that will be adopted in April 2020.

This meeting was also an opportunity for members to benefit from capacity-building on local funds raising and to discuss with members the challenges of building resilience.

The meeting was attended by 23 participants including 16 men and 7 women from 12 countries namely: Nigeria, Sierra Leone, Togo, Congo Brazzaville, Côte d'Ivoire, Senegal, Guinea Conakry, Mali, Gambia, Burkina Faso, Central African Republic and of Cameroon. GNDR Secretariat was also represented by its Executive Director Bijay KUMAR, the Regional Coordinator for West and Central Africa: ADESSOU Kossivi and the Regional Assistant: Aminata SOME.

The program of the workshop was as follows:

- Day 1 : Consultation on the Strategy
- Day 2 : Training session on local fund raising
- Day 3 : Presentation on Coherence

## 2. Opening session

The Executive Director of GNDR Bijay KUMAR opened the session at 09h10mn. He emphasized on the orientations and the importance of the meeting especially the contribution of every participant to GNDR new strategy.

Afterwards, the Assistant Aminata SOME took the floor to introduce herself and guide the participants on the presentation process and the management of the agenda of the day. Thus we

attended a round table for presentation and two volunteers were assigned the mission of time keeper and daily reporter.

Following the presentation of all the participants, ADESSOU Kossivi started facilitating the workshop. He gave the floor to Félicité DJOUKOUO, the focal point who supported the organization of the meeting in Yaoundé to give information related to the logistics and security precautions.

The Board Representative Peter AKANIMOH concluded with his speech, he recalled the importance of the meeting. According to him this meeting will enable a better knowledge of organizations and develop relationship between them.

### 3. Presentation session

#### 3.1 Gender and DRR

The presentation sessions started with the one of Félicité DJOUKOUO, on **Gender and Resilience**. After explaining the notion of gender, she has shown that this variable is not taken into account in disaster management. Noting that the status of men and women is culturally dependent. She questioned participants about the **Maputo Protocol** which has been ratified with no real effect today. For example in Cameroon, while the government has set the goal of including 30% women in decision-making positions, this quota is not yet achieved. She continued illustrating that, women do not have access to the land. This amplifies food crises and, in turn, the inefficiency of some disaster management policies. The low involvement of women in water management policies as primary users, limits their ability to influence prevention and DRR courses and makes them more vulnerable.

Before concluding her presentation, she drew the attention of the participants to the design of proposals to encourage women to be included in the development of DRR projects, including training in prevention techniques; and put together CSOs to control disasters in our regions.

## 3.2 Climate Change

The presentation was made by the participant Mouhamadou Farka MAÏGA. He showed that climate change has significant negative impacts due to the permanent and progressive warming of the earth. According to him, the warming of the climate system is unequivocal. It is therefore urgent to limit its effects in order to meet development requirements. This is what conducted in 2015 to the historic Paris agreement (commitment to curb the rise in temperature to 2 ° Celsius).

This needs to be done through building resilience and the combination of many other factors. Stressing that Africa is a continent already degraded, he pointed out that the future temperature is five times higher than the current one, and that the consequence ratio is between 1.5 ° and 2.5 °, showing that there will have more heat, more hot days, and more bad harvest. He gave the example of the Niger River which is already threatened by pollution and warming of Central Africa. Referring to the floods and drought in his country (Mali), he stressed that these meteorological phenomena are tangible with impacts on health, desertification, deforestation, and represent a threat to food security.

## 3.3 Fragile and at risky zones

The presentation on **Fragile and Risky Zones** was made by ADESSOU Kossivi instead of Amusat KOLAWOLE, a participant who unfortunately could not make his trip.

In an interactive pedagogy, ADESSOU collected from the participants the causes of fragility and the actions to be taken by the CSOs to reduce them. Natural and anthropogenic causes (ex: deforestation, desertification, land degradation, climate change, floods) have been identified and discussed in workshops. Stressing the need to depoliticize local areas, he explained that according to the ILO, more than two billion jobs are threatened by climate change and conflict. Indeed there are many at-risk zones because of social injustice and this weakens development. The consequences of fragility and violence have also been listed, namely: migration, destruction of the ecosystem, interruption of development activities, etc.

After these three presentations, an exchange session was opened. The interventions strengthened the ideas of resilience of populations and gender mainstreaming in its different aspects.

Finally, participants worked into three groups on the 3 themes presented above (cf report of consultation on Strategy)

## 4. Presentation of GNDR achievements

The Board Representative Peter AKANIMOH presented GNDR's "Stronger together" 2016-2020 Strategy, focusing mainly on its various objectives, missions, challenges and achievements (cf presentation). He then invited participants to register on Community Platform. He reiterated the challenges of sustainability, diversity, inclusion and equity that GNDR wants to promote. Peter closed his speech by congratulating the members and introducing a phase of 3 questions that led to the next group work.

### Questions:

1. What are the main benefits of membership for your organization?
2. Which are the activities in which GNDR has had most influence or impact?
3. Which are the activities where GNDR could have improved its impact or influence?

Group works enable to answer these questions. Participants proposed ideas, illustrated and confronted them. (cf report of consultation on Strategy).

During this session, Bijay pointed out that GNDR is not an international NGO that takes the resolutions to implement them at the regional and local levels. Indeed it is a network of over 1000 organizations and 23 secretariat members. GNDR mobilize funds for the implementation of projects and programs for its members. He reminded that GNDR secretariat also supports CSOs in seeking funding for their projects.

It is therefore a system of collaboration and networking between member organizations. Bijay also reminded that it is not allowed to use the logo of the GNDR, except with respect of the

principles, within the framework of the projects proposed to GNDR by an organization expressing the need to be accompanied.

## 5. Group work

A third session of rotating group work was opened about integrating regional issues into GNDR work at regional and global levels. These reflections were made with reference to the three themes discussed previously (Gender, Climate Change and Fragility and Risks). Apart from thematic groups, it was also necessary to identify priorities. The work consisted of noting a single priority per sheet (cfg report of consultation on Strategy)

As a result of these reflections, Bijay conducted a collective restitution. 14 priorities was identified:

1. Work on transferring the resources to local CSOs
2. Getting the voices of the members while GNDR making policy statement
3. Include sustainable management of natural resources in policies and strategies
4. Call on government measures before disaster outbreaks
5. Promote best practices and traditional knowledge
6. Capacity building of members on themes around the strategic priorities
7. Inclusive policy with focus on leave no one behind
8. Gender mainstreaming
9. Invest on building visibility
10. Link DRR to other Global Framework
11. Strengthening of national networks
12. Include territorial management
13. Invest on research to create evidence for engaging policy discourse at national, regional and global level
14. Build awareness on risk informed development in school and universities

Following the identification of priorities, we went to the vote to rank them in order of priority. Each participant had to propose three. The first five priorities that have been retained are the following:

- Priority n°1: **Work on transferring the resources to local CSOs** (09 votes) ;
- Priority n°6: **Capacity building of members on themes around the strategic priorities** (09 votes) ;
- Priority n°8: **Gender mainstreaming** (06 votes)
- Priority n°5: **Promote best practices and traditional knowledge** (06 votes) ;
- Priority n°11: **Strengthening of national networks** (06 votes).

Finally, each participant joined their original group to formulate proposals for concrete national, regional and global actions for the implementation of each of the five priorities selected, as well as the verification indicators of the program implementation (cf report of consultation on Strategy).

## 6. Training on local funds raising

Training session on "**Proposal writing and resource mobilization; Sustainability and Local Fundraising for GNDR**» was delivered by Trainer Jimm Chick FOMUNJONG of the West Africa Civil Society Institute (WACSI)

The objective of this module was to enable participants to:

- Know how to raise funds locally
- Explore the diverse meanings of civil society sustainability;
- Identify the various dimensions of civil society sustainability;
- Interrogate the state of civil society sustainability;
- Examine the key challenges threatening the sustainability of civil society

The first session of the training was based on context and definitions.

At the beginning, useful information was shared:

- Japan, UK, BAD, USA are among the 10 largest donors in Africa

- AFDB organizes every year a meeting with the civil society (Case of a CSO of Sierra Leone who benefited from it).
- The USA is the main funder in Africa (50% of funding, from 2008 to 2012) they mainly finance their institutions established and operating in Africa. We need to know how this can allow us to reposition ourselves, without making a showdown with them, by taking the opportunities available

This brought out the important question: **“Which funder should we address?”**

Then 02 questions of reflection were raised:

1. What are the implications of changing aid dynamics for African CSOs?
2. How should African CSOs respond to these changes?

#### **Answers for question 1:**

- Dependency on aid is killing our institutions
- Communicating less impact on the lives of our communities
- We will choose ourselves our own priority
- Keeps us away from our priorities
- Increases dependency
- Increases the vulnerability of communities
- Generate conflicts due to lack of trust

#### **Answers for question 2**

- Professionalization of CSOs
- Capacity Building
- Networking
- Creation of consortia
- Collaboration with national authorities
- Establishment of an accounting system

#### **➤ Sustainability**

A new session on Sustainability was conducted by the trainer. It helped define the characteristics of sustainability, the challenges and threats.

We have noted that sustainability is the ability of an organization to maintain its independence. Indeed a sustainable organization must have the capacity to ensure its legitimacy

Sustainability has been defined according to 4 dimensions:

- Identity (relevance of mission, legitimacy and accountable systems, recognition and visibility)
- Operational (operating Environment, Institutional infrastructure, influential Power, Quality and continuity of programs, Governance and Leadership )
- Interventions ( Ownership projects, results, communication, partnerships)
- Financial (Income Mobilization and Generation, Financial Planning, Sound financial management systems)

➤ **« Tools for sustainability (using the online Platform).**

The session on sustainability tools followed. In order to better conduct actions, the group work approach was initiated to identify how local authorities can work together with CSOs.

The trainer reminded that there are online training programs on resource mobilization. Especially on the following website: [www.changethegameacademy.org](http://www.changethegameacademy.org)

➤ **What is local fund raising (LFR)? Example of sustainability**

First of all, Fundraising has been defined as engaging and mobilizing people and organizations to support social changes, with money, services, goods, knowledge, time and moral support.

When it comes to local fundraising, it requires less and less funding from the Global North and rise potential for donating money in many developing countries.

This session was guided by an interactive debate that resulted in fruitful contributions. Among other responses we noted:

- Organize the round table of donors

- Adapt to major funding frameworks
- Identify the means available locally before turning to international donors

The debates enabled to note that the mobilization of funds at the local level requires a broader observation of the actions to be carried out. But also that the role of non-state actors is to get governments to ratify certain international protocols that can promote economic positioning through various channels (bloggers, journalists, etc.).

Following these reflections, a restitution of ideas took place on the different sections. Ideas have identified the range of resources available within our immediate environment, but are often considered in fundraising strategies.

## 7. Strategy (follow up)

Following the take away of day 2, working groups were formed to answer a series of questions that were indeed a continuation of the work carried out the first day on the new strategy of GNDR. (cf report of consultation on Strategy). Below are the questions:

1. As member of GNDR what have/are you contributing to your global network?
2. Share specific examples where being member of GNDR has help you with your work.
3. What obstacles hinder more impacts by GNDR network in your region?

## 8. Coherence

The facilitator ADESSOU continued with the agenda of the day mainly focused on "Coherence".

### 8.1 Definition of concept and scope

In the context of GNDR, coherence has been defined as an approach integrating international frameworks for Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR), Climate Change Adaptation (CCA) and Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in order to increase the effectiveness and success of common and respective goals.

After this definition there was a brainstorming to understand what civil society can do to maintain coherence.

### **Contributions from participants:**

- Harmonize the agreements (cases of SENDAI agreements).
- Mapping actions and stakeholders involved in the various agreements with CSOs.
- Set up national platforms of actors.
- Carrying advocacy to promote harmonization and consideration of the logic of coherence in preparing for and participating in global summits.
- Consolidate national platforms for representativeness and a single voice
- - Identify actors with whom to harmonize reports or develop common advocacy.
- -Recall the commitments of the stakeholders we work with (government, etc.)
- -If possible, adopt whistle-blowing methods

Remaining in this burst of contextualization, the following question was the subject of several answers: Why is it important for CSOs to build coherence?

### **Answers from participants:**

- Rapprochement with the community
- Contextualization and valorisation of knowledge and know-how
- Confidence and respect with the community
- Facilitation of capacities
- Access to several actors
- Be aware of the limits of denunciation of the state (limits of collaboration, no confrontation but negotiation with the authorities)
- Advocacy

## 8.2 Role of CSO in the elaboration on coherence actions

This brief presentation helped in identifying the contours of the role and importance of OCSs in this coherence process. According to the items presented, the characteristics listed below justify the importance of CSOs:

- Connection to the community,
- Contextual knowledge,
- Established trust and respect with the community,
- Facilitation capacity,
- Accessibility to several actors,
- Generation and sharing of knowledge,
- Driving change in both practice and politics at all levels using, experience and knowledge

In the project management cycle (planning, implementation, evaluation), where should CSOs be involved? All participants stressed that CSOs need to be involved at all levels.

Among different points presented, ADESSOU also talked about the involvement of governments to ensure coherence in strategies. Out of a survey conducted by GNDR, 23% of local authorities say there is no such involvement. Anyway, it varies a little from one region to another and from one strategy to another. This could be due to more visible and intense impacts on a developed environment when disaster occurs.

This half-day ended by giving participants the floor to share the lessons learned of the day:

- Importance of coherence, disaster management mechanism, role of civil society;
- Federation of efforts with the government, project management practices;
- Coherence and synergy of action, better project planning, national harmony;
- How to conduct a good advocacy, involvement in projects planning;
- Absence of integration of cultural reasoning on disaster management;
- How to advocate by creating evidence and circumscribing actors;

Finally, the participants had the opportunity to express their concerns about the use of Community Platform. The facilitator ADESSOU provided some answers.

Main concerns noted:

- Access to Community Platform (07 participants concerned)
- Difficulty of comprehension of English publications
- Utilization of the Platform: When to use it?
- Heavy and slow Platform requiring more internet data

The workshop ended with the words of thanks of the Coordinator ADESSOU Kossivi and the Board Representative Peter AKANIMOH.

END OF THE MEETING

ANNEXES:

- Report of consultation day on the Strategy
- Presentation on Coherence
- Content of the session on Fundraising
- Content of the session on Sustainability
- GNDR strategy achievements